

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 362 447

SO 023 366

AUTHOR Gage, Andrew, Ed.; Ockenden, Sandy, Ed.
TITLE The Urbanization Scrapbook. A Collection of Articles on Urban Issues for Use in Secondary Schools. Global Issues Reading Kit #3: Urbanization. Revised 1992.
INSTITUTION Victoria International Development Education Association (British Columbia).
SPONS AGENCY Canadian International Development Agency, Ottawa (Ontario).; Employment and Immigration Canada, Ottawa (Ontario).
REPORT NO ISBN-0-932783-17-5
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 71p.
AVAILABLE FROM Victoria International Development Education Association, 407-620 View Street, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 1J6 (\$12).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Civil Liberties; Curriculum Enrichment; Economic Development; *Environmental Education; Foreign Countries; *Global Approach; *Interdisciplinary Approach; Resource Allocation; Secondary Education; *Urbanization

ABSTRACT

The articles in this scrapbook present a global perspective that is both alarming and hopeful. Drawing from Southern and Northern experiences the articles describe a world in crisis, but they don't stop there. By critically examining the status quo, the articles attempt to get to the roots of the crisis, and then move onto describing avenues for change and stories of hope and success. This scrapbook, one in a series, focuses on the particular issue of urbanization. Subtopics include urban growth and problems, homelessness, slums and shantytowns, and urban planning. Many of the essential elements of positive development are highlighted throughout: sustainable economics and resource management; community empowerment; respect for human rights and dignity; and the recognition of the role and status of women. Following the readings is a section of teaching ideas and activities to guide the users through further examination of the ideas which the articles present. Individual sections of the scrapbook can be used on their own, or in conjunction with others. Users are encouraged to read with an open mind, a willingness to learn, and a desire for change that is both environmentally sustainable and socially just. (Author/SG)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

the

URBANIZATION SCRAPBOOK

A Collection of Articles on Urban Issues for use in Secondary Schools

ED 362 447



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL
IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN
GRANTED BY

SILVIA
VILCHES

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 022 366

Global Issues Reading Kit #3: Urbanization
Revised in 1992

VIDEA © 1992

the URBANIZATION SCRAPBOOK

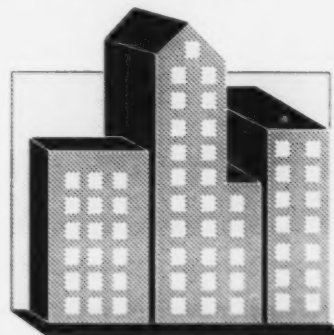
A Collection of Articles on Urban Issues for use in Secondary Schools
Global Issues Kit #3 of a five kit set.
Revised 1992 — with Activities and Ideas to accompany the articles

Edited by Andrew Gage and Sandy Ockenden
Activities and Ideas by Karen Barnett and Kerry Robertson
Layout by Andrew Gage

With Special Thanks to:
Marvin Dodds, Susan Gage and John Simonton
for review and comments

This resource was produced with financial assistance from:
Employment and Immigration Canada (SEED program)
British Columbia Global Education Project
Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA)

**This resource is reproducible
for classroom use.**



The Urbanization scrapbook

(Global issues reading kits; no. 3)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0-932783-17-5

1. Urbanization -- Developing countries. 2. Urbanization. I. Gage, Andrew, 1972- II. Ockenden, Sandy, 1955- III. Victoria International Development Education Association. IV. Series.
HT 361.U72 1992 307.76'09172'4 C92-091743-7



VIDEA © 1992

**Victoria International Development
Education Association**

407-620 View St.
Victoria, BC
Canada V8W 1J6

Telephone: (604) 385-2333

VIDEA's educational programs are partially
funded by the Public Participation Program
of the Canadian International Development
Agency (CIDA)

In most cases permission to reprint extends only to classroom use. Should you wish to reprint an article for another purpose, please contact the publication from which VIDEA reprinted it.

Cover graphics reprinted from (clockwise from the top left):

New Internationalist, May 1989
Development Forum, Nov. 1990
Creating Our Common Future, CPPNW, 1991
ILO Information, No.1, 1991

Development and Cooperation, No.4, 1992
Canadian Social Trends, Summer 1991
Creating Our Common Future, CPPNW
IDRC Reports, Apr. 91

ABOUT THIS SCRAPBOOK

The articles in this scrapbook present a global perspective that is both alarming and hopeful. Drawing from Southern and Northern experiences the articles describe a world in crisis. But they don't stop there. By critically examining the status quo, the articles attempt to get to the roots of the crisis, and then move on to describing avenues for change and stories of hope and success. Many of the essential elements of positive development are highlighted throughout: sustainable economics and resource management; community empowerment; respect for human rights and dignity; and the recognition of the role and status of women.

The readings are followed by a section of teaching ideas and activities. These are designed to guide the users through further examination of the ideas presented in the articles.

Individual sections of this scrapbook can be used on their own, or in conjunction with others. Users are encouraged to read with an open mind, a willingness to learn, and a desire for change that is both environmentally sustainable *and* socially just.

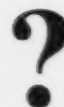
ABOUT GLOBAL ISSUES READING KITS

This scrapbook is one in a series of Global Issues Reading Kits. The complete series is:

- Kit #1 — The Environment Scrapbook
- Kit #2 — The Food Scrapbook
- Kit #3 — The Urbanization Scrapbook
- Kit #4 — The Economics Scrapbook
- Kit #5 — The Population Scrapbook

For information on how to order these kits, or for a catalogue of a complete listing of VIDEA's curriculum materials, write or phone:

VIDEA
407-620 View St.
Victoria, BC
Canada
V8W 1J6 (604) 385-2333



Graphics: Africa File, VIDEA

Special thanks to those publications and periodicals that allowed us to reprint the articles that appear in this scrapbook

Africa Report
833 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA

Alternatives
c/o Faculty of Environmental Studies
University of Waterloo
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G1

Bamberton News
c/o South Island
Suite 550, 2950 Douglas St.
Victoria, BC V8T 4N4

Canada and the World
PO Box 7004
Oakville, ON L6J 6L5

Canadian Social Trends
Programs and Publishing Products -
Acting Permissions Officer
Crown Copyright Administration -
Canadian Government Publishing
Centre
Ottawa, ON K1A 0S9

Childhope USA
333 East 38th Street
New York, NY 10016
USA

Development and Cooperation
Hans-Böckler - Straße 5
D-5300 Bonn 3
Germany

Development Forum
PO Box 5850
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163-5850
USA

Focus on Women
1218 Langley St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1W2

Globe and Mail
Thompson Newspaper Ltd.
444 Front St. W.
Toronto, ON M5V 2S9

IDRC Reports
PO Box 8500
Ottawa, ON K1G 3H9

ILO Information
International Labour Office
CH-1211
Genève 22
Switzerland

Lutheran Compass Centre
77 S. Washington
Seattle, WA 98104
USA

New Internationalist
Cover Stories, The Observer
Chelsea Bridge House, Queenston Rd.
London SW8 4NN
United Kingdom

Occasional Papers
332 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60604
USA

Pacific News Service
450 Mission St., Suite 506
San Francisco, CA 94105-2526
USA

Panoscope Magazine
1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Suite 301
Washington, DC 20036
USA

Population
United Nations Population Fund
UNPFA
220 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017
USA

State of the World Population
See Population (UNPFA)

Tribune
Internat. Women's Tribune Centre
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA

UNESCO Courier
31, rue Francois Bonvin
75015 Paris, France

UNESCO Sources
7 Place de Fortenoy
75700 Paris, France

Utne Reader
LENS Publishing Co. Inc.
1642 Harmon Pl., Suite 330
Minneapolis, MN 55403
USA

World Development
Division of Information
UNDP
One UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA

Worldwatch Institute
1776 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Urban Growth

1. **Land is Scarce and They're not Making any More** p. 1
Cities around the world are running out of space. Land has become a commodity.
2. **Confronting the challenge of tomorrow's cities — today** p. 2
We must begin planning for the mega-cities of tomorrow.
3. **World's Largest Urban Agglomerations** p. 3
A chart of the populations of the world's 12 largest cities — in the years 1975, 1990 and 2000.
4. **Urbanization in Canada** p. 3
Urban growth is by no means limited to the Third World. In 1986 less than a quarter of Canada's population lived in rural areas.
5. **Ever-expanding Cairo, Causing "urban crisis" in Egypt** p. 6
A Case Study: Egypt was the first Arab country to adopt a national population policy. Despite this the city of Cairo is mushrooming, with one in five Egyptians living there.
6. **World's largest city struggles with migrants, environmental hazards** p. 6
A Case Study: Mexico city is the largest of many cities struggling with a huge population.
7. **Urban Exiles** p. 7
Most of the people of the Amazon live in towns and cities, dislocated from their homeland.

Urban Problems

1. **The Man-Made (sic) Side of Natural Disasters** p. 9
Natural disasters always seem to hit Third World cities especially hard. Why?
2. **Thirsty Cities** p. 11
Water is essential for survival, but getting it to all of the residents of a city can be next to impossible.
3. **The Unquenchable Thirst of Cities** p. 13
Some of the problems facing urban hydrologists seem almost insurmountable.
4. **Slow Death in the City of Angels** p. 14
Thailand's rapid industrial growth is now causing major health and environmental problems in the city of Bangkok.
5. **Women's projects** p. 15
A hypothetical project in a Third World country designed to train women is a failure due to the problems facing women in cities.
6. **Auto Earth** p. 18
One of the greatest urban problems may be that modern convenience, the automobile.

Homelessness

1. **Myths and Facts of Homelessness** p. 20
Many people find it easy to dismiss the poor and homeless, with a collection of myths and stereotypes.
2. **No Place like home...** p. 22
Homeless women in Victoria, BC, face added hardships.
3. **Homeless in Harare** p. 26
The influx of people into urban areas is bringing the Western problem of homelessness to African cities.
4. **A signal of alarm** p. 28
Street children represent a major crisis in cities, with 30 million street children worldwide.
5. **Fact Sheet on Street Girls** p. 29
The majority of street kids are boys, but there is a largely invisible population of street girls as well.
6. **Street Movement** p. 31
Street kids in Brazil are organising and speaking out about friends who have been killed or injured.
7. **The Children of Smokey Mountain** p. 33
Community help is being aimed at the children who scavenge in the Smokey Mountain garbage dump outside of Manila.

Slums and Shantytowns

1. **The Squatter-builders of Lima** p. 34
The slums of Lima, Peru, dubbed "spontaneous districts", are actually a response to the failings of government policy.
2. **Slums are Not a Dead End** p. 36
Despite complaints about slums, their inhabitants often have far better access to services than they would in rural communities.
3. **Offending the eyes of the Mighty** p. 38
When the Olympics came to South Korea, the poor had to be removed from view. Where did the squatters end up?
4. **"SPARC" of Hope for India's Slum Dwellers** p. 39
The SPARC project is becoming a tool for the empowerment of women in slums.
5. **Super Barrio to the Rescue** p. 41
A real caped crusader is standing up for Mexico city's "barrios"

Urban Planning

1. **Redesigning our Cities** p. 43
Our cities are growing ever outwards, swallowing up valuable farmland and creating car-dominated wastelands. Now, city planners hope to grow upwards, not outwards.
2. **The Importance of Planning — Seoul: A Case Study** p. 46
A Case Study: People and the environment must be incorporated into urban planning in Seoul.

3. **Rediscovering the Village** p. 47
Modern urban planning is moving away from the idea of the "city as machine" towards a model of "city as a village".
4. **How to make cities more humane** p. 49
Many cities have already made the first steps towards including people in urban plans.
5. **People power transforms a St. Louis Housing project** p. 51
The residents of a public housing project that was an "ugly urban scar" took action and turned the project into a community.
6. **The Cultivated City** p. 52
Urban kitchen gardens are providing green spaces and food in Buenos Aires.
7. **A Love Affair that's really a forced marriage** p. 53
Do we drive cars, or do they drive us? A report on the battle to overcome the hold the automobile has over cities.
8. **Calming Motorized Traffic** p. 54
When pedestrians and bicycles are given priority, cities become a very different place.
9. **Twelve Dimensions of Sustainability at Bamberton** p. 55
A community just north of Victoria is marketing itself as a green community. Here are twelve principles that the planners see behind an ecologically sustainable community.
10. **Women, Shelter and the Environment** p. 56
Involving women in urban planning and environmental problems may make a big difference.
- Activities and Ideas** p. 57

URBAN GROWTH

LAND IS SCARCE AND THEY'RE NOT MAKING ANY MORE

All over the world, cities are facing the same problem - space, or more accurately, the lack of space. This is as true in sparsely populated Canada (2.6 people per sq. km) as it is in overcrowded Hong Kong (5,910 people per sq. km).

The reason for Hong Kong's shortage - all 1,000 sq. km of it - is obvious, but Canada? With all that space? The problem is very few of us want to live in "all that space," we all want to live in the nation's cities. In 1871, when the government started collecting numbers on this sort of thing, just 18.3 % of Canadians were considered urban dwellers. Today, more than three quarters of us live in urban areas. Ontario is the most urbanized province (82%), while Prince Edward Island is the least urbanized (38%).

With so many of us trying to squeeze into our cities, pressure is put on land surrounding them. As suburbs spread across what used to be farms the cost of land soars. In 1990, a 2.3-hectare site for "affordable" housing just outside the northwest city limits of Toronto changed hands for \$8.4 million - that's a whopping \$3.6 million per hectare. More reasonably, land in Milton, a community 45 kilometres northwest of downtown Toronto, has been changing hands for \$250,000 a hectare; that's still a heck of a lot of money. But, land is now a commodity and, as with other commodities, its scarcity is reflected by its value.

As a result of these high land prices, the cost of housing in Canada is sky high too. Because of this, there is a serious shortage of affordable housing for people on lower incomes (in our major cities, low incomes means any family pulling in less than about \$50,000 a year).

**"The World's sure
getting crowded,
cities most of all."**



Hong Kong's land shortage is so acute that it's cheaper to reclaim new land from the sea than to buy existing land. Yet, Hong Kong has an ample supply of new and low-cost housing. There's a snag, of course. Owning a detached house with a garage and a pool in the back yard is out of the question in Hong Kong. There, people make do with less - a lot less. A typical apartment might be only 45 sq. m and would sell for about \$70,000. But, that's housing someone in a lower income group could afford to buy.

Japan is another country that suffers from a critical land shortage. Real estate in Tokyo sells for around \$30 a square centimetre, or \$17,100 for a piece of land the size of this magazine page. A house in the capital city now costs more than 15 times the average annual income. In Japan the solution, insofar as housing is concerned, is also to make do with less. The 190 sq. m home, typical of Canada's cities is unusual near Tokyo, Yokohama, or any of Japan's major cities. For the majority, city living in Japan means living in an apartment, probably a small one, or moving so far out that a two- to three-hour commute each way is necessary.

Japan has built up and out, so the next obvious step is down. Tetsuya Hanamura is head of Taisei Corporation, a development company. Quoted in Time magazine recently, Mr. Hanamura said: "An underground city is no longer a dream. We expect it actually to materialize in the early part of the next century." Well, maybe Mr. Hanamura. But, there's no question, we'll have to be innovative in finding ways of making the world's cities more affordable for the people who want to live in them.

Reprinted with the permission of Canada and the
World magazine, Oakville, Ontario

Confronting the challenge of tomorrow's cities - today

By Nafis Sadik

In less than 10 years, and for the first time in history, more than half the world's people will be living in cities. Many of these cities, especially those in the developing world which are growing at unprecedented rates, will have populations above 20 million, far beyond anything on earth at the moment. Planning for this monumental urban growth will be one of the major challenges facing developing countries for a century to come. The time to rethink our urban strategies is now.

Since the advent of industrialization, we have looked to the cities for cultural advance and intellectual innovation, sophistication in technology and political and economic leadership. In the past, the answer to the traps of poverty and population growth was urbanization and industrial development. Most governments still rely on urbanization and industrialization as a means to generate wealth to escape from these traps.

However, in their attempts to escape from the poverty-population trap by following the time-worn path of industrialization and urbanization, developing countries may be heading straight into another. The mega-cities of the developing world are turning into parasites rather than producers, generating more problems than solutions. The cities of the industrialized countries grew slowly over the centuries and in an unplanned fashion for the most part. But the mega-cities demand some form of planning and the use of "clean technologies" for their nascent industries. Since such large urban agglomerations will affect the world's environment and economy, it is in the interests of the developed world to help. To allow this type of urban growth and industrialization to "just happen" may well be suicidal. Major cities in developing countries, even those which possess major industrial concentrations, are consuming resources at irrational

and accelerating rates, inadvertently creating around themselves circles of devastation instead of prosperity. Rampant industrialization, pollution and destruction of agriculturally productive land slowly strangle longer-term development and skew the rational allotment of precious human resources. The magnet of urban life drains rural areas of life and the means to raise living standards, creating gross distortions in income distribution favouring metropolitan populations.

Over the past two decades we have witnessed many cities grow beyond available resources and capacities, a foretaste of what is to come, especially in the developing regions. Not only are their populations spilling over, so are the expectations and frustrations.

Key to this rapid urbanization is population growth. More than 85 countries have urban populations double the size of 10 years ago.

Cities in developing countries are growing at 8.6 per cent per year compared with only 0.8 per cent in the industrialized countries. The population of a typical African capital city, for example, will grow between 60 and 80 per cent within the next 10 years. By the end of the century, the urban population of the developing world will be almost double that of the developed world.

This process has forced the neglect of rural development, and major environmental problems — loss of ground water, desertification, despoliation of the great watersheds and the tropical forests — have low priority. The combined pressures of poverty and population growth have made formerly self-sufficient rural populations marginal, vulnerable and insecure.

Soaring needs for food, housing, water and sanitation are presenting governments with the overwhelming task of supplying basic services to urban populations. Billions are spent building urban sanitation facilities when low-cost irrigation systems in rural areas would be far more productive. Creating sufficient new jobs for their increasing urban populations is beyond the capabilities of most economies in the developing world.

New directions are needed. One will be to look afresh at the role of the city and what it offers. The search for a sustainable prosperity calls for new and safer technologies. They in turn may call for less concentration and more diffusion of populations. Furthermore governments need to decentralize and to put more economic and infrastructure investments into the development of smaller cities to siphon off rural to capital city migration. In an era of high-speed communication, the smaller city may come into its own as a place to live and work.

Another strategy is undoubtedly a direct attack on rapid population growth rates in developing countries. Slower population growth will ease pressure on resources, slow urban growth and allow some time to develop policies of sustainable development, democratization and decentralization.

These solutions are not easy, but must be given serious attention if we hope to pass on to our children a world that is both urban and viable, that can sustain great numbers of people in peace and relative prosperity, and in harmony with the environment that supports them.

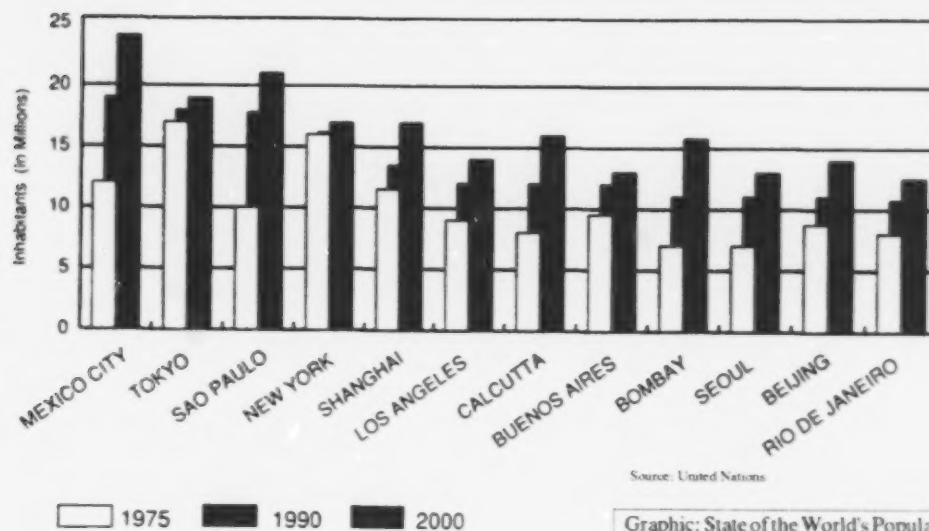
Nafis Sadik is the executive director of the United Nations Population Fund, headquartered in New York.

Reprinted from Development Forum,
March-April 1991



World's Largest Urban Agglomerations

(10 Million or more inhabitants in 1990)



Graphic: State of the World's Population, 1991.
© United Nations Population Fund

URBANIZATION IN CANADA

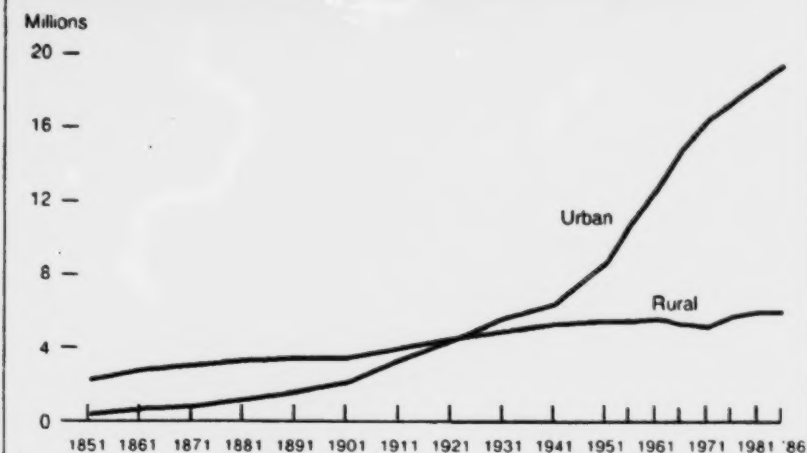
Urbanization has been a persistent feature of Canada's demographic history since Confederation. It can be viewed as both a cause and an effect of socioeconomic change. Migration from rural to urban areas has occurred largely in response to perceived greater economic opportunities in cities. And while concentration of population in large cities is presumed to foster economic expansion through the creation of agglomeration economies (e.g. provision of specialized financial services, the availability of an experienced workforce), it has also led to growing societal problems such as crime and declining social cohesion. Cause and effect aside, the changing distribution between rural and urban Canada is central to concerns about the viability of rural areas, and the magnification of social problems associated with urban size.

Urban transformation

Population has grown in both urban and rural Canada since 1851. Undeniably, however, the major trend has been towards urbanization. Canada's transformation from a rural to an urban society occurred less than 70 years ago: the switch took place between 1921 and 1931. By 1986, the 19 million people living in urban areas accounted for 77% of the total Canadian population, and the remaining 6 million (24%) lived in rural areas. This contrasts sharply with the distribution of the population in 1851 when 87% of Canadians lived in rural areas, and just 13% lived in urban centres.

Metropolitan growth

Urban population growth from 1951 to 1986 varied by size of the urban area. Large centres grew more quickly than smaller centres. Most of the growth occurred in centres with populations of 100,000 and over, resulting in an increasing concentration of population in Canada's Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs). By 1986, more than half of the Canadian population lived in large CMAs. In fact, that year, the nine largest CMAs (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa-Hull, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Quebec City and Hamilton), accounted for 47% of the Canadian population, and the top three CMAs for 31%. This compared with the 1951 figures of 32% for the top nine CMAs and 22% for the top three.



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada.

From 1981 to 1986, 65% of population growth occurred in the Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver CMAs.

And, in fact, population in the top nine CMAs grew more sharply than the overall urbanization trend. The top nine CMAs grew by 10%, and the top three by 9%, compared with just 5% for all urban areas.

Most of the population growth took place in the urban cores. In fact, between 1981 and 1986, 75% of the total population growth occurred in the urban cores of Canada's CMAs and Census Agglomerations.

Rural growth

The rural population has increased in number since the mid-1800s. In 1986, 6 million people lived in rural areas, compared with 4.8 million in 1931 and just 2.1 million in 1851. In recent years, much of the growth has occurred among the non-farm population living in the

rural fringes of large urban centres.

The number of people living on farms declined sharply from 1931 (the year statistics were first compiled on the farm population) to 1986, whereas the rural non-farm population showed an equally strong rise. Since 1956, most rural Canadians have lived in non-farm areas. By 1986, the rural farm population numbered 890,480, down from 2.6 million in 1956 and 3.2 million in 1931. In contrast, the rural non-farm population numbered 5 million people in 1986, up from 2.7 million in 1956 and 1.6 million in 1931. By 1986, the rural non-farm population accounted for 85% of rural Canadians, up from 32 % in 1931.

Urban/rural growth rate

Urban growth rates exceeded rural growth rates from 1861 to 1986, except during the early 1970s. From 1971 to 1976, the urbanization trend was reversed and rural growth rates narrowly exceeded those for urban expansion. While rural non-farm population increased sharply, farm population actually declined by 14%. Indeed, the growth rates for rural non-farm population exceeded increases for all sizes of urban areas.

The interruption of urbanization, which also occurred in the United States and other developed nations, sparked speculation of a rural renaissance and provoked research into the reasons for, and even the existence of, a turnaround.

In Canada, much of rural population growth during this period occurred close to major urban centres, suggesting that some of the measured rural growth could be attributed to urban spill-over. Other reasons are less clear.

While a significant movement of people from urban to rural areas occurred during the 1970s, the effect on urbanization was largely offset by the influx of international migrants to Canadian urban areas. As well, the growth rate of the rural population in Canada differed depending upon whether or not rural areas that had been reclassified to urban were included in the calculation.

Rural growth rates were again below those of urban areas in the 1976-1981 and 1981-1986 periods. Thus, the rural renaissance appears to have been ephemeral. Nevertheless, differences between rural and urban growth rates have been smaller since 1971 than they were in the 1950s and 1960s, suggesting that while urbanization is not reversing, it has slowed markedly.

Urban/rural migration

Most Canadians move to urban areas, either from rural areas or other urban areas. However, from 1971 to 1986, there was also a net gain in the rural population due to internal migration. This occurred because people moving from urban to rural areas outnumbered those moving from rural to urban areas.

The net internal transfer of population to rural areas reached its peak of 256,000 people from 1976 to 1981, and declined to 77,000 in the 1981-1986 period. This reflected less movement into rural regions rather than an increasing level of migration out of rural areas.

International comparisons

The phenomenon of urbanization is not isolated to Canada. Population concentration in urban centres has been evident in much of the world since at least the 1950s.

By 1985, 41% of the world's population lived in urban areas. The United Nations projects that the proportion will increase to more than 60% by 2025. In the more developed regions, where urbanization is proceeding more slowly than in the less developed regions, the urban proportion of the population is projected to increase to 78% by 2025, from 72% in 1985. In contrast, in the less developed regions, where overall population growth is still high, the urban population is projected to increase to 57% of the total population by 2025, up from 31% in 1985.

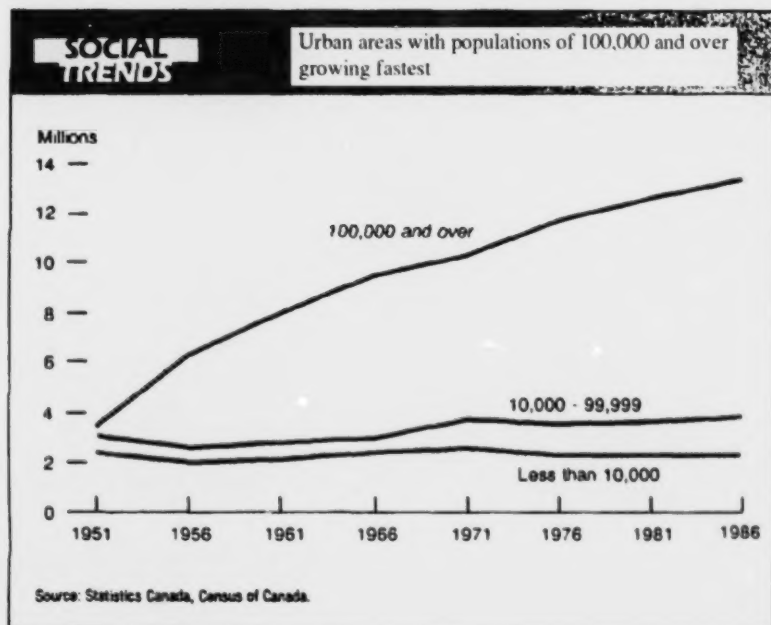
Rates of urbanization vary depending on a nation's development. For example, the Canadian experience of a slowing rate of urbanization is common to the more developed regions of the world (Europe, North America, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the USSR). This slowdown is to be expected because rural migrants have less scope to contribute to urban growth in countries that are already predominantly urban.

Over the past forty years, slowing in urbanization in the more developed regions has been accompanied by an overall drop in the rural population. Since 1975, Canada and the United States, however, have been exceptions to this pattern, as they have both experienced growing rural populations. Rural growth in Canada, however, has been consistently higher than in the United States during this period.

In contrast, urban population is still increasing sharply in the less developed regions. Between 1950 and 1985, growth rates of urban areas with populations greater than two million, were highest by far in the less developed regions. For example, the population in Mexico's largest urban areas grew by about 20% from 1980 to 1985, compared with a 3% increase in comparable areas in Canada and the United States.

Nevertheless, the urban areas' share of population growth has been consistently higher in Canada than in the United States. Just two Canadian CMAs - Toronto and Montreal - have populations of more than two million. Between 1950 and 1985, these two Canadian urban areas have had a higher cumulative growth rate than their American counterparts. However, the gap has narrowed from over ten percentage points in earlier years, to just one point during 1980 to 1985.

Both authors are with the Agriculture Division, Statistics Canada; Brian Biggs is an analyst and Ray Bollman is a research economist.



Reprinted with the permission of the Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1992 from Canadian Social Trends, Summer 1991, pp. 23-27

Ever-expanding Cairo, Causing "urban crisis" in Egypt

EVERY YEAR, Cairo encroaches on 1200 hectares of agricultural land. The city's expansion is "a severe urban crisis, the dimensions of which are being shaped by rapid population growth and limited habitable land," according to a new United Nations report.

The profile of the Egyptian capital is the latest in the series *Population Growth and Policies in MegaCities* produced by the Population Division of the UN Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

Cairo's estimated 10 million inhabitants - nearly one in five Egyptians - live in some of the most cramped conditions in the world. In some neighbourhoods, there are as many as one hundred people to one square metre of land.

Egypt's population is estimated at 52 million. The UN expects the country's population to grow by about six million people by 2000 - the National Population Council expects Cairo's population to swell by seven million. Newcomers to the city in the next ten years will include workers returning from other parts of the Middle East, where employment opportunities are dwindling.

Egypt was the first Arab country to adopt a national population policy, in 1963. Contraceptive knowledge is almost universal among Cairo's women, and 48.3 per cent of currently married women use modern contraception. The National Population Council wants to double nation-wide contraceptive prevalence by century's end.

Informal housing mushrooms in a city where conventional housing is scarce. For example, between 250,000 and one million people rent above-ground burial vaults and graveside shelters in the "City of the Dead" - Cairo's ancient cemeteries.

Unemployment in Greater Cairo, home to almost half of Egypt's manufacturing workers, is estimated at about 10 per cent, although as many as one in three Cairenes might be underemployed. Current policy calls for a moratorium on industrial investment in Cairo. If strictly enforced, this policy "raises the spectre of rising rates of unemployment among the metropolitan labour force," the report states.

Access to health care and schooling is considered good. Egypt has one of the best ratios of doctors to population in the developing world, the report states. There are enough hospital beds in Cairo, and overcrowding in hospital outpatient clinics is relieved by a network of government-approved, subsidized Islamic clinics. Some 75 per cent of Cairenes can read and write.

But other public services have fallen behind Cairo's growth. One in five residents has to use canals, wells, and public water fountains for want of piped water. Sanitation is similarly scarce.

Severe traffic congestion, insufficient public transportation, and an acute shortage of parking spaces come with one of the world's lowest provisions of road space per person and the dramatic proliferation of private vehicles. Accident rates are among the highest in the world: 80 fatalities and 600 injuries for every 10,000 vehicles. Underground, lack of funding has staid further expansion of Cairo's nascent metro, which can carry 120,000 passengers per hour.

Looking to the future, the report states that Cairo will have to contend with chronic environmental decay as its older buildings crumble under attack by salt from a rising water table.

The report concluded that "financing urban development in the future is likely to be one of Cairo's - and Egypt's greatest challenges."

Both articles reprinted with permission of the United Nations Population Fund from *Population Magazine*.

World's largest city struggles with migrants, environmental hazards

MEXICO CITY, population 20 million, has the dubious distinction of being the world's largest city. It will come to house between 25 million and 27 million people by century's end, a new United Nations report says.

The Mexican capital is an example of what might happen to other cities in the developing world if they fail to check their rapid growth, according to *Population Growth and Policies in MegaCities* - Mexico City. The report is the latest in a series of megacity profiles published by the United Nations Population Division.

Some 500,000 migrants move to the city every year, settling in shanty towns commonly called "the urban stain." Their arrival thickens some of the world's highest population densities; fuels the city's 4.4 per cent annual growth rate; and worsens chronic environmental problems.

By 1970, the city's built-up area grew to almost seven times its size in 1940. As the "urban stain" spread, it enveloped neighbouring municipalities and thousands of hectares of farms and forest. In 1989, Mexico City's concrete expanse spanned some 1,250 square kilometres.

This rapid expansion has imposed a heavy environmental burden. Atmospheric pollution is estimated to have worsened by 150 per cent in the last 10 years. Automobile emissions are mainly blamed for this. Most of the growth in population and car ownership is taking place in areas not reached by the subway, which serves only the city centre's Federal District. Car engines produce about twice as much carbon monoxide in Mexico City's thin, high-altitude air, than in cities at lower elevations.

The water system of the high mountain valleys which cradle the city has been irreversibly damaged. The megalopolis is sinking as it draws what little water it can from the earth.

Mexico City's population long ago outstripped the city's sewage processing capacity, which was diminished by damage caused during the 1985 earthquake. Garbage disposal has also failed to keep up. Although the city is considered clean in comparison with many megacities in developing countries, the report estimates at least one quarter of the more than 10,000 tons of solid waste the city churns out every day is dumped illegally, or remains uncollected from back streets.

Copies of *Population Growth and Policies in Mega Cities: Mexico City* are available from: Office of the Director, United Nations Population Division, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, 2 U.N. Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel (212) 963-3186. Other reports in the series include: Bangkok, Bombay, Calcutta, Cairo, Delhi, Dhaka, Jakarta, Karachi, Madras, Metro Manila, and Seoul.

Urban Exiles

Most of the people of the Amazon live in towns and cities. They talk to David Ransom about life, death and dislocation.

'PEOPLE are stupid!' says Lucia, sitting in a café in the great city of Belém — 'Bethlehem' — at the mouth of the Amazon.

She wears a mock leopardskin blouse and her hair is swept back from a heavily made-up face. Beside her sits a woman with elegant spectacles — she reminds me of an aunt of mine in England.

'They don't want to see the benefits that unity can bring us. They are fooled into seeing only the things that divide us. But of course all of us poor people, black, brown, yellow, white, whatever race we belong to, whatever sex we are, all of us have many problems in common.' The woman next to her nods her agreement.

The café is built over an open sewer in the industrial part of Belém. Across the road more women are gathered around a factory gate. It is one of the factories owned by the Mutran family, who control a large part of the city's Brazil nut processing industry. I have been brought here by Igina, a smart young woman who gave up commercial work to join the Movement of Rural and Urban Women.

All the women I talk to tell much the same story. They work long hours for minimal pay in unhealthy conditions. They are paid piece-work rates and receive nothing for damaged Brazil nuts although they are still sold in their crushed form. Pregnant women are sacked, and since many have half a dozen children or more, that adds up to an awful lot of sacking.

Most of the women live across the open sewer in a rambling shantytown that was 'invaded' by workers in the Brazil nut factories 15 years ago. In some ways

it is a familiar Latin American urban scene. But what makes this different is that all the workers in the factories are women and the community is largely run by them. They have joined the Food Workers Union and some have become active in the Movement of Urban and Rural Women.

'As you can imagine, there's plenty of machismo in the union and plenty of members expect the women just to do what they are told,' says Igina. 'In fact there's just one woman full-time official. But unions in Brazil are only now beginning to recover from the inheritance of the military dictatorship when everyone had to belong to official unions.

Their job was to keep their members in line. Now, for the first time, the leaders are beginning to think about the interests of their members. They have even supported strikes by the women in these factories. Radical women are beginning to make an impact, and some of the men don't like that.'

These, too, are the people of the Amazon. They live in the cities and towns where once the forest stood and now the forest invading the Amazon are generated. This is where the people who quit the forest end up — and from where those who invade it frequently set out.

There is a point south of Belém that is known as the 'Parrot's Beak' — because of the shape formed by the boundaries of the states of Pará, Tocantins and Maranhão where they meet. Here the Belém-to-Brasília high-

way crosses the new 900 kilometre railway running from São Luis on the coast to the giant Carajás iron ore mine. It should be blessed by the benefits of modern, industrial development. Instead it is the scene of the most intense and violent land conflicts in Brazil.

Take a look at Açailândia, perched on hilltops near the actual junction of the highway and railway. On these hilltops, balancing precariously over eroded gorges, thousands of people live in utter squalor. Most of them are rural workers driven from the land by the *fazendeiros* — the ranchers. Without facilities of



"So it's partly inequality and lack of land that's making people move to cities."

Graphics: The Africa File, VIDEA

any kind, they live in minute wooden shacks. The smallest of all are on a patch of land 'donated' by the friend of a local politician who made as many promises as possible in exchange for votes in recent elections. The air is thick with the acrid smoke of burning wood from hundreds of adobe ovens making charcoal. Such conditions are common throughout the world. I've seen plenty just as bad. But there is something peculiarly sickening about this place. I try to figure out what it is.

Part of it is simply the sight of the great rainforest being destroyed. There are said to be some 600 sawmills in the 300 kilometre stretch between Imperatriz and Paragominas.

They export the best hardwoods to the rich world. Second-class wood is used for the domestic building and furniture trades. The mills are incredibly wasteful, losing as much as 70 per cent of the usable wood.

But the worst part of it is, I think, the way deforestation combines with massive foreign investment to produce utter human misery. One might argue for ever about why this should be so. But you have to begin by seeing that it is so. And the biggest single complaint I hear from the people actually experiencing it is that no-one wants to know. Talking to the active members of trade union and community groups, who risk their lives for their work, I discover what I think lies at the heart of my growing sense of outrage.

The single measure more likely than anything else to halt the continued deforestation of the Amazon is the equitable distribution and more efficient use of the land already cleared. That means land reform. It also means orchestrated violence and intimidation to prevent it — or any other challenge to the power of the *fazendeiros* and *patrões*.

Our companion, Gil, is a trade unionist who worked on the Belém-Brasília highway. He stops as we drive along it and points to a place where he unearthed the bodies of fellow construction workers buried in a shallow grave. A little further on he shows us where labourers were simply burned to death in the forest instead of being paid. (The first news I receive on returning to England is that Ribeiro de Souza, president of the Rural Workers Union in Rio Maria, just to the south, has been assassinated. He is the twelfth rural workers' leader killed in the Parrot's Beak in just one month.)

The violence is directed precisely against those people who are leading the search for a better future, not just for themselves but for the forest as well. We talk to union leaders from the sawmills in Paragominas, and they are perfectly well aware that their work is destroying their children's future. Most of them are farmers who look for inspiration to the Movement of Landless People and the Union of Rural Workers.

A sense of exile and displacement pervades the towns and cities of the Amazon. Indeed, it pervades urban Brazil. The greatest migration of all is, in fact, from rural to urban life — to the gigantic industrial conglomeration around São Paulo in Southern Brazil, where now upwards of 40 million people live. And it is here that the Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI) works to strengthen the political influence of Brazil's indigenous peoples — and to develop alternatives to deforestation.

Ailton Krenak is the Union's national leader. His people, the Krenak, were evicted from their traditional lands before he was born. His parents moved to São Paulo. Perhaps it was a sense of displacement that gave him his early insights. 'As a boy I already had a clear vision, but I had no real understanding,' he says. 'I have always had the feeling that the Indian nations are really one people.'

So he set out on a voyage around Brazil to meet them, hitching lifts where he could, travelling with Indian chiefs to meetings. 'It was as if the original streams were meeting to become one river, gathering strength as it flowed. We began to create expectations where before there had been nothing but despair.'

Links have been forged with rubber tappers through the Forest People's Alliance and Ailton is interested in working with rural and industrial unions. 'But we're not interested in just talking. We need to take practical steps, small measures that will provide a positive example'.

I travel with him to the Centre the Union of Indigenous Nations has set up near Goiânia on what was once forested land just south of Brasília. Representatives of indigenous peoples from right across Amazonia come here to study alternatives to deforestation. Ailton wants them to return to their villages with the knowledge they have gained.

In the evening I go for a walk with Mario Krenak, the caretaker of the Centre. He takes me into a plantation of maize. At its centre is a tiny hut. Inside it are Jovenó, Maria and their two small children. They offer us food and

coffee. They are landless migrants from southern Brazil who have been taken on by the Centre, though they are plainly not Indian.

We sit in silence, the 'Indian', the 'migrants' and the 'gringo' together, watching the sunset over the valley as the children

play with a plastic scooter. What I am finally beginning to realise is that no amount of intimidation can remove entirely from these people their sense of dignity or their courage to resist. The violence they have all endured can also take them beyond their personal suffering, across racial, cultural and geographical divides. That, I feel certain, is how their future, and that of the forest itself, will eventually be secured.

"It was as if the original streams were meeting to become one river, gathering strength as it flowed. We began creating expectations where before there was nothing but despair."

Reprinted from the New
Internationalist, May 1991

URBAN PROBLEMS

THE MAN-MADE (sic) SIDE OF NATURAL DISASTERS

Fifteen years ago, 23,000 Guatemalans died, more than 100,000 were injured and close to a million were left homeless — all in less than one minute. The force of one of the largest earthquakes ever in this small, poor Central American country devastated the population and left more than a billion dollars in damage.

A similar quake in Nicaragua in 1972 destroyed most of the capital city, another caused havoc in El Salvador in 1985, and Hurricane Joan wiped out homes and lives on the east coast of Nicaragua in 1988.

Like the wars that have put this region in the headlines, the six countries of Central America seem to have more than their share of natural disasters.

Earthquakes, volcanoes, droughts, floods, torrential rains, mudslides, and hurricanes occur here with a frequency unheard of in most other parts of the world.

But the problems of Central America are not solely the fate of nature. In fact, according to Jose Luis Gandara, who headed a research team looking at Guatemala's natural disasters, "the disasters are not natural, but the result of natural phenomena in vulnerable places."

Proof of this point is the fact that the earthquake that hit the major American city of San Francisco in 1989 resulted in fewer than 100 deaths, whereas a similar quake in Central America would likely have left thousands dead. In Central America, the low level of eco-

nomics diversification, concentrated populations in several high-risk zones, the lack of an economic and social infrastructure, and low incomes all add to the probability that a natural phenomenon will become a natural disaster.

Research conducted by a team of Central Americans and Canadians, with funds from IDRC, looked at these problems and attempted to find solutions. Using field research, the study established high-risk zones, assessed the disaster plans of public authorities,

and estimated the potential impact of future disasters on the socio-economic and organizational structures of the countries.

The 17 month project, based in Costa Rica, used the same methodology in each of the participating countries, says project coordinator Allan Lavell of the Consejo Superior

.....
"So that's why disasters in the Third World always seem to be so much worse than in, say, the U.S."
.....

Graphic: The Africa File, VIDEA



Universitario Centroamericano. These countries included Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

In Guatemala, Mr. Gandara, research director of the faculty of architecture at the University of San Carlos, led a team of professionals, researchers, and graduate students.

Mr. Gandara says there are two main problems facing his country in dealing with natural disasters. The first is politicians who are slow to commit money to disaster planning before there is a disaster. "We have problems with the institutions coordinating natural disasters here in Guatemala," he explains. "They don't have a forward-looking vision about the problem. They work only when we have a disaster: we see this problem in all the countries of Central America."

The second problem, Mr. Gandara says, is that large numbers of people live in makeshift shacks unable to withstand even mild natural phenomena. "Our people live in poor conditions and their housing is often in bad shape," he says. "Their vulnerability is greater than the vulnerability of those in Canada or the United States."

Like El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras, war and poor economic conditions have pushed many of the rural people of Guatemala into the cities. With only marginal incomes, they squat on the outskirts, building "champas" from bits of tin and wood, or slightly more durable "adobe" houses from blocks of hardened mud. It is these structures that are the first to collapse with the force of an earthquake, bringing thousands of deaths. Many of these structures collapse with lesser force, in summer rains or mudslides.

"Thirty percent of the people in the main cities are living in these types of shelters or on the sides of inclinations," Mr. Gandara says. "They are the most vulnerable."

Before his research team could make any recommendations to public authorities, they had to delve into the history of Guatemala

and its natural disasters. They studied every publication, manuscript, and newspaper they could find, searching through the records of the "conquistadors" in Spain and later in the newspaper collection and national archives of Guatemala.

Using this preliminary information, they divided the disasters into three types: geophysical, hydrometeorological, and geodynamic. The researchers then made maps of the country showing the places where the main disasters had taken place.

"We combined this information with the economic production and infrastructures of each region to determine what areas had the highest risks," Mr. Gandara explains. "We looked at the relationship between the risks and vulnerability and at what places the poorest people live."

The number one high-risk area is Guatemala City, particularly the northwest section, where tens of thousands live in adobe structures. Other major cities like Antigua, less than an hour's drive from the capital, and Quezaltenango, further northwest, also face high risks.

Some regions like the huge Peten Plateau in northeastern Guatemala are classified as low risk simply because they are more sparsely populated.

No Building Codes

Mr. Gandara says these results are not startling but serve as important sources of information for politicians at all levels of government and point out what actions are necessary to protect human life and ensure a minimal impact on the country's economy.

But in Guatemala - and the rest of Central America - much more is needed than an assessment of high-risk zones, Mr. Gandara says. His team found little in the way of laws and regulations that would minimize the risks. There is, for example, no building code and no agency responsible for ensuring that construction is safe and resistant to earthquakes.

The research team is calling for stronger laws and regulations to prevent disasters or at least to mitigate their effects. They would like to see a government agency created to set and monitor building codes.

The researchers also want a national plan drawn up identifying the zones of high, medium, and low risk that would include the density of population and the economic activities and services of each region.

Mr. Gandara says there must be some links between all organizations doing emergency preparation work and these groups should include public participation. In addition, he recommends a coordinated emergency plan that would include the evacuation of buildings, the provision of medical services, and the education of people on what they should do following a natural disaster.

"The public sector must be coordinated to prevent and mitigate disasters and avoid the duplication of functions," Mr. Gandara

contends. "Organizations must reverse their roles and work towards prevention, instead of simply waiting to respond."

He believes less than US\$50,000 a year is spent on disaster planning even though millions have been lost from natural disasters in the last 20 years alone. His team has urged the government to reassign money and spend more on prevention.

Environmental protections are also needed, including a program to prevent an environmental disaster after a natural phenomenon occurs. The study also recommends that an inventory should be taken of all the resources in the country that could help develop a prevention program and monitor natural disasters.

In Guatemala, Mr. Gandara's research team is using the results of the study to lobby politicians and make them aware of the long-term implications of natural disasters.

Already, he has a partial commitment from the mayor of Guatemala City to develop an emergency plan for the city that could ultimately save thousands of lives. Newspapers and television stations have taken up the cause publicizing the study's results and urging political leaders to commit themselves to an emergency preparedness program.

"We are trying to create a consciousness in the people who make the decisions that they can improve the situation," Mr. Gandara says. "We want them to know about the risks and the potential solutions."

Kim Bolan, Central America

Reprinted from IDRC Reports,
October 1991

"...large numbers of people live in makeshift shacks unable to withstand even mild natural phenomena."

THIRSTY CITIES

Water. Next to oxygen it is the most important natural substance keeping us alive. To many, it seems to be a free and seemingly endless source of life. But it is not endless.

The relentless demand of an increasing global population is placing an incredible strain on existing water resources. This strain has become critical in the larger urban centres of many developing countries. Here, water supplies are not only subject to overuse but contamination as well. Many cities are having problems with both the availability and the quality of water.

A combination of limited resources and poor water management have resulted in widespread pollution, scarcity, and even land subsidence - the actual sinking of cities caused by excessive groundwater extraction.

The larger cities of the developing world show the most visible signs of these problems.

One of the main features of global evolution in the past 50 years has been, and will continue to be, the phenomenal growth of huge urban centres. There are currently as many as 45 cities throughout the Third World with populations nearing, or in excess of, 3 million people.

Eight Third World cities have already exceeded the 10 million mark: Mexico, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Calcutta, Bombay, Cairo, Shanghai, and Seoul. The average growth rates in these cities between 1950 and 1980 was 3.5-4.5% a year. Urban population growth is still very high, placing an extreme burden on water resources.

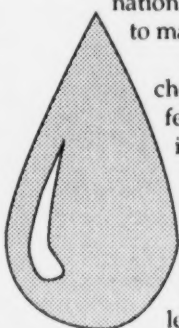
Population is one of the major causes of water contamination. The water on which cities rely is often polluted by enormous amounts of human waste, sometimes channelled untreated into open bodies

of water. Other cities depend on reservoirs that cannot provide enough water for their mushrooming populations forcing people to find alternative, unregulated sources of water.

Urban areas also use large amounts of water for industrial purposes. Once used, these waters suffer significant quality degradation. The polluted waters are then dumped into rivers, lakes, and coastal waters hitting the environment with the double blow of reduced quantity and quality of water. Regrettably, antipollution legislation in developing countries is often vague or nonexistent. Where it does exist, it can be easily circumvented.

In most Third World countries, the economy and environment are caught in a negative cycle. To meet their financial obligations, many countries have concentrated on the production of cheap export goods. This prevalence of industry in urban areas - much of it in the form of multinational companies - is bringing about considerable damage to the environment.

Meanwhile, government funding for programs, such as environmental protection, is often unavailable or way down on the priority list. Many national and urban governments do not have the money, or the will, to make a long-term commitment to their natural resources.



The environment is, in essence, being sold along with the cheap exports. There is an unfortunate string of examples. Coffee-production wastes are ruining the freshwater environment in the Magdalena and Cauca basins in Colombia, in the Tiete basin in Brazil, in the Eldoret region in Kenya, and in North-eastern Tanzania.

Tanning-industry wastes have completely killed the natural fauna and flora of many streams in the province of Buenos Aires, in Southern Uruguay, in India, and in many other leather-producing countries.

Gold-extraction operations (using cyanide or mercury) are destroying the water environment in many developing countries, such as Brazil, Colombia, and Papua New Guinea.

Some heavily industrialized, large urban centres like São Paulo, Calcutta, Mexico City, and Cairo have a particularly poor record of environmental protection of their water resources.

Cities, through their expanding populations and industrial exploitation, are damaging or even destroying their life-giving water resources. These urban areas are only beginning to realize that they cannot keep going to the same well.

Where Water Comes From

There are two types of water resources used for urban water supply - surface water (rivers and lakes) and groundwater (underground wells and springs). Surface waters are often the easiest source of water and their use can be very straightforward.

These waters, however, are also easily polluted. In most cases, the small- and medium-size streams of Third World cities have become highly contaminated acting as little more than open sewers. Small lakes located near cities have suffered the same fate.

There are scores of cities that have damaged their neighbouring water bodies. Some examples include the Chao Phraya river in Bangkok, the Hooghly river in Calcutta, the Laguna de Bay in Manila, the Tiete river in São

Paulo, the Bogota river in Bogota, the Xolotlan lake in Managua, and the Amatitlan lake in Guatemala. The list goes on.

Larger bodies of water, like rivers or lakes, are slightly less vulnerable. They can, however, gradually become polluted and unusable because of increasing demand and a lack of restrictions on usage. Once these sources of water are polluted, the clean-up task is difficult and expensive. The Nile river downstream of Cairo and the Plate river of Buenos Aires are facing serious and expensive pollution problems. If current urban growth and environmental degradation trends continue unchecked, it is expected that soon very few, if any, rivers in the developing world will be able to be used for water supply without heavy and expensive treatment procedures. During the latter half of this century, cities have increasingly used ground-water resources to compensate for the gradual loss of surface water. Many of the 20 larger cities in the developing world pump water from the ground to meet the needs of their populations: Mexico City, Bangkok, Calcutta, Manila, Jakarta, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Beijing, and Shanghai.

Underground water reservoirs are contained in the voids of the sediment and rock underneath the earth's surface. These "aquifers," as they are known to geologists, range from relatively thin and shallow pools to huge volumes hundreds of metres beneath the surface.

This water stored under the ground is often abundant and of high quality. It is also significantly less vulnerable to contamination because it is more or less protected by layers of sediment and rock.

But polluted water can, and in fact has, found its way into the underground reservoirs. Few notice this invisible pollution, but it exists, and it is almost impossible to clean up.

Aquifers, although containing abundant volumes of water, are also finite and cannot accept indefinite extraction beyond their renewal potential.

Unfortunately, not many countries have a clear idea of the renewal potential or the vulnerability of their groundwater resources. Most cities using groundwater - Lima, Beijing, and Manila to name a few - are overpumping their aquifers beyond their renewal possibilities.

Water levels in Third World urban areas have been dropping consistently. In Manila, water levels have decreased during the last two decades by about 4-10 m a year; in Beijing the drop in the city's 40,000 wells has ranged from 1 to 3 m every year. Similar figures have been registered in Mexico City and Lima.

In some coastal cities, overpumping has drawn salty sea water inland, a phenomenon that is called saline intrusion. This is the case in Dakar, Jakarta, Lima, and Manila. Another negative aspect of overpumping is the dewatering of parts of the aquifer. When water is taken out of the aquifer some moisture also leaves the surrounding layers of sediment. The result is a compaction of the overlying land and a dangerous sinking phenomenon called land subsidence. This has occurred in Mexico City and Bangkok.

Expensive Alternatives

The net effect of this deterioration in both ground and surface water resources is increasing costs in finding alternative water supplies. A basic trend of water resource development is that the most accessible water sources are developed first - and often they are contaminated first. New sources of water are difficult to find and more expensive.

Many cities have actually dropped their standards of water quality, allowing consumption of water that would not normally be considered safe. Although information is scant, there is evidence showing that waterborne sicknesses such as diarrhea, hepatitis, and cholera have become commonplace in many cities.

Other cities have rationed the supply, with water cuts becoming a part of daily life. But this problem is even more pronounced in the poor and slum sections of large cities. It is estimated that about 200 million urban dwellers in the Third World lack the benefits of safe running water. When urban growth and lack of financial resources force governments to reduce their water service, these neighbourhoods usually feel it the most.

Water resource management in developing cities is not getting better. The costs of water supply schemes are booming and many Third World cities are finding it increasingly difficult to afford them.

Reprinted from IDRC Reports,
October 1990

THE UNQUENCHABLE THIRST OF CITIES

The challenge of urban hydrology

Throughout the course of this century the sprawling metropolis of Mexico city has sunk by almost 11 metres into the filled-in lake bed on which it was built. In Texas, the land within a 64 kilometre radius of the capital, Houston, has dropped almost three metres below its original elevation. The cause? Withdrawal of increasing amounts of water from the aquifer below these two cities to satisfy their seemingly unquenchable thirst.

The world's ancient cities, such as Babylon, Nineveh or Memphis were largely in harmony with their environment and overall impact appears to have been minimal. Not so with today's metropolitan giants which transform vast stretches of land into endless blocks of masonry, replacing grass, shrubs and trees with asphalt, concrete and impervious rooftops. "A large urban area creates a major upheaval in the hydrological cycle," explains Professor Cedo Maksimovic, who heads the Unesco sponsored International Research and Training Centre on Urban Hydrology (IRTCUD) in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. "The heat and air pollution generated by cities affects climate, while the impermeable surfaces increase and accelerate storm runoff. These torrents, apart from causing material damage, pick up the pollution generated by industrial and other human activities and can lead to a serious deterioration in the quality of the water supply."

Anyone for a glass of H₂O?

Old cities are particularly vulnerable. "The drainage systems in these cities are aging and do not have a sufficient capacity for coping with waste and stormwater, causing floods frequently combined with, sewer overflows and pollution," says the Professor. Add to this such practices as using un-

derground injection wells to "dispose" of hazardous wastes, or accidental spills of these materials in an urban area, along with the overuse of agricultural chemicals, dewatered mines and salt-water encroachment into aquifers, and the idea of enjoying a long, cool drink of water from the tap becomes somewhat less attractive. That is, of course, if there is a tap, and in many of the developing world's cities that simple device is a rarity, the most common source of water being standpipes placed in central locations and often serving several hundred residents at a time.

It has been estimated that in many Third World counties only half the basic human need for water is being met, and the scenario for the future presents no easy solutions. The urban population in these countries is growing much faster than their authorities can install the necessary infrastructure to cope with the swelling ranks, which between 1970 and the year 2000 will have climbed from 635 million to 2155 million - an increase of almost 350 per cent. By contrast, in the industrialized countries over the same period, the urban population will have increased by only 54 per cent.

Cholera canals

While cities in the industrialized world may lack adequate drainage systems, in many third world cities such systems are virtually non-existent, which means not only floods, but outbreaks of such deadly diseases as cholera.

"Some cities in China have to be evacuated for an undefined period during floods," points out Professor Maksimovic. "Rio de Janeiro, Tehran and many African cities are subject to severe damage and suffer severe loss of life because of frequent flooding."

In the Sudan in September, 1988, at least 70 people died and another 1,500,000 were left homeless most of them in the capital, Khartoum when heavy rains devastated the region prompting authorities to declare a state of emergency. On the other side of the world, at Nuku'alofa, a town of 22,000 in the Pacific island kingdom of Tonga, runoff from heavy rainfall drains into a valley in the centre of the town. Consequently, during and following rainy periods, parts of the town can remain flooded for days and even weeks. When the storm runoff passes through the town it becomes polluted with overflow from septic tanks and pit latrines. As a result of such overflows, filariasis is endemic and there are some cases of elephantiasis.

Helping cities understand and overcome their water problems is IRTUD's main aim. The centre was founded following Unesco's 1987 General Conference and works in cooperation with other UN agencies as well as several specialized international organizations. It is the main operational arm for Unesco's work in the area of urban hydrology and concentrates on the collection of data concerning urban hydrology, research, training, directing aid to areas in most need, and raising awareness of the importance of urban drainage problems. The task before the Centre is daunting in its scope. Rapid population growth, the extension of irrigation and industrial development have made it impossible for humanity to continue a "use and discard" philosophy - either with water or any other natural resource. As a result, the need for a consistent policy of rational management of water resources has become imperative.

S.W.

Reprinted from UNESCO
Sources, March 1990

Slow Death in the City of Angels

Ann Danaiya Usher

Thailand is praised for its rapid industrialisation and growth rates that topped 10 per cent in 1989 and 1990. But the downside is the worsening health associated with growing environmental problems.

Each dry season, the lunar landscape of Bangkok's Orn-nuj garbage dump site is spotted with smouldering methane fires that ignite spontaneously in the dry heat. The hundreds of scavengers who make their living by picking through the rubble wrap their heads with cloth as protection against the white noxious gases that blanket the earth.

Doctors at nearby health clinics report a sudden rise in the incidence of breathing problems and respiratory diseases at this time of the year. During the rainy season, their patients suffer from unusual levels of parasitic and infectious diseases.

While this is the norm for the scavenger communities, residents of Klong Toey - Bangkok's largest slum of more than 60,000 people - have other matters to contend with. These include unclean water supplies, crowded conditions, noise pollution and constant fear of eviction.

In the time it takes to read this article, Bangkok - meaning "City of Angels" in Thai - will have produced another 24,000 kg of household waste, which the city remains totally unequipped to treat. By the end of the day, almost six million more will be added to festering mountains of garbage at the Orn-nuj, Nong Khaem and Ram Intra dump sites.

This is a city where 2.3 million cars and motorcycles crawl along the jammed streets at an average peak time speed of five to eight km an hour. It is estimated that 800 new vehicles are added daily to the fray.

Vehicle pollution in Bangkok is so severe that 41 per cent of traffic police surveyed were found to have respiratory problems. Children here are born with levels of lead in their blood exceeding 18 milligrams per decilitre. People, particularly children, can suffer brain damage at levels between 10 to 15 mg/dl.

Most factories are concentrated in and around the capital. The result is that, for example, 71 per cent of the two million tonnes of toxic industrial waste produced in Thailand each year come from the capital region, as does 52 per cent of the 208,000 tonnes of sulphur dioxide emissions.

There is capacity to treat only 40,000 tonnes of toxic waste a year, so substances like heavy metals and oily sludge eventually enter the Chao Phya river, the city's primary source of drinking water. The river is so contaminated by domestic and industrial effluents that it will be biologically dead in nine years if nothing is done about it.

To top it all, Bangkok - situated less than a metre above sea level - is sinking by about a centimetre a year due to the

uncontrolled extraction of underground water.

Consultants' reports offering solutions to traffic jams, waste disposal, land subsidence and every conceivable environmental problem line the shelves of city offices. But the will and the money to implement them are lacking. In the case of waste, for example, the city recoups only 30 per cent of the Bt1 billion (US\$40 million) it spends collecting and disposing of it. At fault is an inefficient payment system and low collection fees.

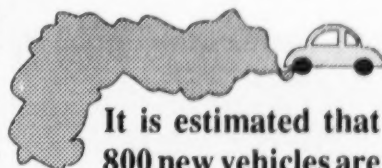
Bangkok city official Prathuang Thavisinin says it would be "politically dangerous" to raise fees because the service is so poor. About 5,400 out of the 6,000 tonnes of daily waste are left to "dissolve naturally" - in open dump sites - a process that takes 995 years, exclaims Prakit Posayanant, another city official.

Incinerating the household garbage would cost five times the US\$10 per tonne that the city spends on dump sites.

Critics say that the only way out of the environmental nightmare and its associated impact on health is to slow the expansion of new sources of pollution. This would include enforcing existing regulations on hotels, condominiums and factories and stopping subsidies to foreign factories that release hazardous waste.

Ann Danaiya Usher is an environment writer based in Bangkok.

Reprinted from Panos July, 1991



It is estimated that 800 new vehicles are added daily to the fray.

Clipping
IN THE BEGINNING...

...local newspaper...

SUDLANDIA TIMES: June 10, 1988

**COUNCIL RECEIVES LARGE GRANT
FROM INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR
MAJOR WOMEN'S PROJECT!**

Mayor quotes findings from research studies that show high rate of malnutrition amongst children in depressed district. Job training for women and more funds spent on family needs seen as important way out of dilemma.

Sudlandia. Friday June 10. It was announced today at City Hall that a major project is being launched that will train 200 women involved in small-scale production of brooms, clothing, baskets and processed food. The project seeks to increase income available for household food and nutrition. Access to production sites in the new Municipal Centre and on-going technical support from the Business Service Centre will back-up the skills training. The announcement was made at a press conference called by the Mayor, with a representative of the funding agency standing alongside.

The news has come at a particularly important time. With unemployment at an all time low and a recession gripping the region, people interviewed in the street expressed relief at the possibility of training and new jobs becoming available. Women were especially pleased, as it

seemed that they will finally be receiving much needed training and income possibilities. Some of the men were not so enthusiastic, expressing the opinion that the training should be focused on the needs of unemployed men rather than on the needs of women.

Research studies show clearly that women and children are the ones most severely affected by the recession. With women being more likely to spend any income they receive on family needs, the project is expected to improve the overall condition of the whole family. "This will be the largest project of its kind in Africa, and is planned as a showcase project," said the Mayor. "It will hopefully be replicated in many other communities worldwide."

An evaluation of the project will be undertaken after two years.

TWO YEARS LATER...

SUMMARY PROJECT EVALUATION

June 10, 1990

Project Title:
INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT INFORMAL PRODUCERS

Project No.
SUDLANDIA/892/87/10WN

Planned Outputs

1. 200 graduates with basic training in management accounting and inventory control.
2. 40 graduates with advanced technical skills training.
3. 10 production groups organized and installed in municipal production centre.
4. 10 production groups registered and taking advantage of advice available from business services centre.

Expected Impacts:

1. Reduction of childhood malnutrition among participants' families by 10%.
2. Increase in income of at least 20% for at least 100 of 175 participants.



Actual Outputs:

1. 200 women enrolled in basic business management course; 125 graduated; 80 completing final exam with scores above 85%.
2. Only 28 women recruited for advanced training; 10 completed course.
3. 7 production groups organized, 3 working at municipal centre.
4. 2 production groups using services of business service centre.

Actual Impacts:

1. Clinic attendance grows; malnutrition rates remain the same.
2. Income increase averages 13% for 20 women

STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: *Agency Head*
FROM: *Evaluation Officer*
DATE: *July 10, 1990*

Re attached Summary of the Project Evaluation. There's more to this showcase project than meets the eye.

Ethel Okemo from the Women's Centre dropped by to see me and mentioned that our target population of women failed to participate because of some serious problems of violence. In the first month, one of the women trainees was raped on her way to the municipal centre.

In the fifth month, the mine across the border closed bringing many husbands back home without jobs. It was fear of beatings from their husbands if they were not home to prepare meals that led to 32 dropouts.

Despite our projections, few women wanted to sign up for the advanced course because it involved using tools traditionally used by men and the women feared beatings from their husbands if they found out they were using them.

Without training and with a very real fear for the safety and security of the new production centre, incomes haven't gone up as expected. Women don't have added income for household food and so nutrition levels remain unchanged.

Unfortunately, the evaluation form as it stands does not allow for us to report the negative effects of violence on the women taking part in the project. Also, because personnel in the agency are uncomfortable talking about violence, and particularly violence against women, (I guess regarding it as a personal matter?) it is difficult to bring up the issue and discuss it as a very real obstacle to the success of this project.

We have a major problem! What do you suggest?

Reprinted from the Tribune with
permission from IWTC



The poisoned pavement

ROADS require tremendous amounts of resources. Vegetation is stripped away, destroying habitats so that animals flee or are crushed beneath earth movers. The topsoil is pushed aside and the land's contours are smoothed. Streams and pools are filled, diked or ditched.

If bridges are needed, pilings are sunk into rivers. Sediment chokes the water, killing fish and disrupting other aquatic life. Modern roads require not only the area upon which the roadbed is laid, but also shoulders, graded rights of way and ditches and culverts to drain run-off water.

Asphalt is made from the toxic tar that

remains from coal and oil processing. To that is added aggregate which often comes from incinerators and power plants - and is laden with dangerous heavy metals like cadmium and mercury. These materials slowly leach their contents into the land and the water.

To maintain roads and to clear weeds from ditches, crews often spray the weeds with carcinogenic herbicides, the same basic chemical made popular as Agent Orange in Vietnam. Waste oil is sprayed to suppress dust on unpaved roads. During snow-storms, roads are salted to melt ice, polluting groundwater supplies.



Space invaders

WHEN you add up all the space devoted to parking lots, expressways, cloverleaves and roundabouts, flyovers, bridges, gas-stations and garages, close to a third of all land in cities goes to accommodate the automobile.

Motorways and the associated interchanges, exits and entry ramps cover thousands of acres of prime food-producing land in Europe. In the US, 60 thousand square miles (10 per cent of the country's arable land) have been paved. That's an area the size of England. Parking lots devour huge stretches of land but are empty 80 per cent of the time. Between parking spaces at home, at work and at the shopping center, the average car uses three times the space of the average home. Parking lots for shopping centers are the most environmentally destructive. Car berths are marked by thick puddles of oil and transmission fluid. And their water run-off violates environmental standards set for industrial discharges.



Auto

Cars are the single largest drain on the world's natural resources they are also a major source of hazardous waste and pollution. The average driver trails a plume of poisonous exhaust, asbestos brake



Oil guzzlers

THE world's 386 million cars are the main consumers of non-renewable petroleum. Motor vehicles in 1985 accounted for 35 per cent of all oil consumed in Japan, 44 per cent in Western Europe, 49 per cent in the Third World and 65 per cent in the US. Canadians and Americans together use about 125 billion gallons of fuel per year - about 800 gallons per car. Australians use about 500 and Europeans about 300.

Gasoline is refined from oil. Oil that is pumped from the ground needs huge amounts of water to push it out and fill the space it occupied. In the process, drilling brines and solvents contaminate groundwater in the area. If oil is pumped from the sea, surrounding waters are poisoned and sporadic leaks drift landward to foul nearby beaches and estuaries.

A frantic search for oil, to keep the global car fleet running, touches the world's most fragile environments. Oil companies are now clamouring to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where estimated reserves would fuel American autos for a mere 200 days.



Earth

linings, synthetic rubber tire dust, toxic oil drippings, and fugitive air-conditioner coolant. Eric Draper takes stock of the auto's impact on the global environment.



Ploxic waste

PLASTICS are quickly replacing metals in car production: 200 million pounds of plastics are used annually in autos. Two pounds of hazardous waste are produced for each pound of plastic. Much of the steel, iron and aluminum is recycled when cars are scrapped. But plastics are burned off, releasing toxic gases. Burning plastic from motor cars accounts for much of the poisonous dioxin now being released into the environment.

Toxics are also released when cars are manufactured. Paint-thinners, de-greasers and solvents are all released into the atmosphere. Each year 250 million auto tires are produced, largely from synthetic rubber which is difficult to recycle. In the US, tire plants along Ohio's Cayahoga River dumped so much waste into the river it caught fire. The factories are now closed but the river is still biologically dead.

Every year 100 million lead auto batteries are discarded. Eventually their plastic casings crack and release lead-laden acids.



Gas attack

EACH time an engine cylinder fires and fossil fuels burn, the exhaust gases add to the world's load of air pollution.

The main chemical emissions are carbon monoxide and dioxide, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur as well as particulates like lead. Carbon monoxide slows the rate at which oxygen is absorbed into the bloodstream. Small exposures cause shortness of breath and decreased alertness. Large amounts can kill. Motor vehicles produce an estimated 67 per cent of the carbon monoxide in the atmosphere.

'Smog', the dirty brown air which envelops many cities, is a mixture of hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides chemically altered by sunlight.

Concentrations of less than one part per million of nitrogen oxides are enough to disable persons with chronic respiratory diseases. Hydrocarbons such as benzene are proven carcinogens. And diesel engines also produce large quantities of particu-



lates which are known to produce cancer. An estimated 60 per cent of Calcutta residents suffer from respiratory diseases caused by air pollution much of which results from motor vehicle exhaust.

Nitrogen and sulfur oxides from car exhaust also contribute to acid rain, which is destroying forests and cropland. Cars, trucks and buses generate more than half of all nitrogen oxides in Western Europe.

Motor vehicles also produce 17 per cent of all the carbon dioxide released from burning fossil fuels. This is the principle 'greenhouse' gas.



Additive alert

GASOLINE and diesel fuel are distilled at huge refineries which produce both toxic waste and toxic air emissions. The refineries are located in towns that have the highest cancer rates and are populated by workers with the highest occupational disease rates.

Deadly additives (lead and ethylene dibromide or combinations of benzene, toluene and xylene) are mixed into gasoline to improve performance.

Lead is a persistent and troubling pollutant that accumulates in the body and causes brain damage, kidney failure and anemia. Even so, leaded fuel is still the

norm in much of the world. In 1986, lead-free fuel accounted for only five per cent of total gasoline sales in Europe. In Mexico City air, lead levels are so high that doctors estimate children will suffer an average IQ loss of five points.

Car air-conditioners use around 13 per cent of all chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Once thought to be harmless, these indestructible molecules climb to the upper atmosphere where they attack the ozone layer. Ozone shields the earth from ultraviolet light which burns plants and causes skin cancer. Another 50 per cent of CFCs are used in molded foam to make auto interiors and exteriors.

Eric Draper works for Clean Water Action in Washington DC.



Reprinted from the New Internationalist, May 1989

Urban Problems

19

HOMELESSNESS

Myths and Facts of Homelessness

MYTH: Homelessness has always been with us. It's just a fact of life and will never change.

FACTS: The nature and magnitude of homelessness is greater now than in any other period in history. As many as 3 million people are homeless in the United States. This figure does not account for the thousands of "hidden" homeless — people living with relatives and friends, constantly at risk of being turned out on the streets.

Homelessness is neither a temporary nor a seasonal problem. It is increasing at the rate of twenty percent per year in the United States alone. A recent study concluded that, without any change in national low-income housing policy, 18.7 million Americans will be homeless by the year 2003.

MYTH: The homeless are all alike — skid row bums.

FACTS: The stereotype of the grizzled alcoholic skid row bum barely scratches the surface of today's homeless. The homeless are men, women and children of every description. They have in common a lack of income and housing they can call their own.

MYTH: The homeless are all social failures and have themselves to blame for their condition.

FACTS: The homeless are the new poor, victims of political, social and economic factors over which they have little control.

The primary causes of homelessness are the critical lack of affordable, low-income housing, economic factors, and federal cutbacks of social services to the poor.

• **Housing:** Each year thousands of units of low-income housing are lost nationally due to gentrification, abandonment, conversion, demolition and arson. Most of the homeless previously lived in poorer areas of central cities — the very areas subject to the highest abandonment and the worst quality of housing. Public housing, the last resort for the poor, is not being constructed under this [U.S.] administration.

• **Economic Factors:** The one characteristic that all of the homeless have in common is that they are poor. The ranks of the homeless are

swelled by high persisting unemployment, falling wages, and changes in the structure of the economy which have widened the gap between skilled and unskilled workers. Real wages are shrinking and jobs are marginal; for the unemployed, the chances of getting a decent job diminish year-by-year. Unemployment is now an accepted feature of our economy: forty-four percent of new jobs created in the last six years lie at poverty-level wages.

• **Federal Cutbacks:** An estimated fifty percent of the increase in poverty among families with children since 1981 is due to the reduction of government programs to aid the poor. These include Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), the Food Stamp Program and federal low-income housing programs. Close to 300,000 of the elderly and disabled Social Security recipients were permanently cut from the Social Security rolls by 1985. Many of them ended up in the streets.

MYTH: The homeless are all drunk or crazy.

FACTS: The most visible of the homeless are also the most dysfunctional and the ones who suffer most from chronic illness and a lack of adequate resources. These include victims of alcoholism or substance abuse and mental illness.

MYTH: The homeless are all single vagrants; no families are homeless.

FACTS: Families with children are the fastest growing segment of the nation's homeless population (thirty percent last winter). Children make up forty percent of the poor population in the United States. One quarter of white children are poor; one half of African-American children are poor. The United States is the only industrialized nation with a rate of growth in poverty among children.



Graphic: The Africa File, VIDEA

"I think the homeless deserve more than name-calling."

MYTH: The only homeless women are bag ladies and prostitutes.

FACTS: Women constitute a larger and larger portion of the homeless population. Many of them go "unseen" by choice. The most vulnerable of the homeless are frequent victims of emotional and physical violation. Most homeless women take great pains to remain invisible. Among homeless women are those who have been victims of battery and domestic violence, single women heads-of-households, and those who suffer from chronic unemployment, mental illness or multiple disabilities.

MYTH: Homeless kids are all delinquent.

FACTS: Kids who are homeless are not, for the most part, either the "Street toughs" or the weekend runaways. They are youngsters between the ages of eleven and twenty-one with histories of chronic sexual, physical and emotional abuse from families that are dysfunctional, alcoholic, or broken.

MYTH: Battered women are not homeless — just battered.

FACTS: All battered women who are in shelters are homeless. When a woman leaves a battering situation, she often leaves her home permanently. For most who have the courage to leave, the decision has taken months, sometimes years, of dangerous, escalating abuse. When they do leave, it is usually with only the clothes on their backs. Some twenty five percent of women in Seattle shelters claim to be victims of battery; the actual incidence of battery is found to be much higher — about one out of every three women housed has been battered, many too ashamed or frightened to admit it.

MYTH: The homeless are all dangerous.

FACTS: The homeless are among the most vulnerable of those on the streets, the victims of frequent emotional abuse (often from those with disdain for them) and physical violence. Over a one-year period in New York City, fifty-nine percent of the homeless had property stolen, eighteen percent had been beaten, and twenty-six percent had been threatened with weapons. This is merely a prototype of every city in the country.

MYTH: There are adequate resources. No one has to be homeless.

FACTS: The vast majority of the homeless (more than seventy-four percent) are unable to resolve their crisis permanently because of lack of available resources and options. Emergency shelter is only the tip of the iceberg for the kinds of ongoing resources needed to assist in the stabilization of the homeless, particularly those who have been chronically homeless, unemployed, or who are challenged by special problems. On the average,

less than twenty percent of the immediate emergency need for beds is being met.

MYTH: If we provide services here, they'll come from all over the country.

FACTS: Homelessness is a national crisis, not a problem that one city alone can handle. Emergency services are being provided, in varying degrees, to the homeless all over the country. Of the total number of homeless seeking shelter in Seattle in 1986, only eleven percent were recent arrivals. This is certainly not a high enough figure to suggest a national movement to that area.

MYTH: It's their problem. There's nothing we can do.

FACTS: The gap between the rich and the poor is rapidly increasing as more and more middle-class households join the ranks of the homeless. For many of us, homelessness is just a paycheck away. The problem belongs to each of us. We must all participate in the solution.

Things You Can Do

- **Stay informed:** Keep up on current issues, trends, legislation; know what is being done locally. A good national resource is the National Coalition for the Homeless, 1621 Connecticut Ave., Suite 400 Washington, DC 20009; (202) 265-2371.
- **Support legislation:** Support legislative proposals to aid the homeless and equalize the balance between the rich and poor.
- **Write letters** to your city council and mayor to endorse low-income housing preservation in your city.
- **Volunteer your time, skills and/or talents** to agencies working with the homeless.
- **Educate your own community on homelessness.**
- **Make monthly pledges** of money, clothes, food, or toiletries. Find out first what is needed by the agency you choose to support.

Reprinted with permission from the
Lutheran Compass Center

No Place like home...

"Come on in! There's someone here I want you to meet." Arriving at the Victoria Police Station, I am anxious to talk to Corporal Ruth Lick about women on the street and more anxious to meet whatever authorities she might have on hand. But I'm not prepared for the authority she has in mind.

In an interview room, a 6x10 foot concrete block cell with a steel door, a young woman dressed in jeans and a tee-shirt huddles on a wooden bench bolted to the wall. Her runners are on the floor. Her sleeves are bloodstained. She's been shooting up. When the police picked her up, she'd been on a four day run (four days of straight drug use).

Ruth tells Karen why I'm here. Stoned, upset, she still agrees to talk to me. Ruth steps out and locks us in.

Life on the street

Karen says she's 25 and has been on the street for 12 years. She's always had a place to go when the going gets really rough.

"I'm a little different than most people. I have a street boyfriend. I've been with the same guy for 11 years," she explains. "I have a home to run to and then I have my other life."

A drug addict, Karen has been using every day for eight years. Addiction keeps her on the street.

"Street life is disgusting," Karen spits out. "People don't admit it 'cause it's all they got ... dirty, talking to people, using, everybody using. It's a life of getting used and you get used. There's no happy, no sad, no feeling — just one emotion."

She knows the only way she can survive is to get on the methadone treatment program — easier said than done. There is a six to eight-week waiting period and an initial investment of \$300. The person then pays \$50 a month for the methadone. Is

\$300 much compared to the cost of coke? Karen shakes her head; the draw of the pusher is far stronger than investing \$300 and then waiting — not to mention trying to stay straight enough to get to the appointment.

She shares her home with her boyfriend and a really supportive friend, who are trying to get her straight. Her family cares too, and want her to stop. But the addiction is so great she can't make that next step.

Where does she get the drug money? "I turn tricks — and I pick-pocket the tricks that are mean to me... really f—in nasty people. People don't realize how nasty these people can be."

No time is worse than another. "It's just all shitty and lonely." Yet when she started on the street at age 13, it seemed cool to hang out downtown and natural to try drugs to see what they were all about.

"Everybody was doing it and I was watching them. I don't know why I'm doing it now. I'm so scared. I've overdosed about 33 times. I get so scared and lonely and frustrated.

As Karen talks, she hugs herself tighter and runs her fingers through her long red-blond hair. Despite being dirty and strung out, Karen is not unattractive. She could still be very beautiful.

"I'm very violent at home. I can't argue, I can't talk," Karen says angrily. "[On the street] I don't let anybody talk to me. I'm a loner. I'll slap anyone who talks down to me. I never rip anybody off, so when they do I won't take it."

Unlike Karen, many young women on the street have no homes. Karen says casually that they go from hotel to motel, staying the night with tricks. I comment that must be the worst part of street life. She says sadly, "No, the worst part is the drugs. I hate drugs."

I ask Karen about the cops. Are they harsh? Cruel? Cold? Ruth Lick seemed very caring and compassionate just in the brief exchange I witnessed between her and Karen. "I really like her the best," Karen says. "I really don't hate anybody in this world except maybe myself."

She goes and sits in the corner, crying. "Streetpeople — I don't like them at all. I don't like that side of me, either. You've got to be so cold out there."

Then she shuts down. My interview is over.

Ruth

Karen is one of dozens of women who walk the streets of Victoria. Some sleep outdoors, at StreetLink or with friends. Others rent inadequate rooms that can't be called homes. A few have decent housing.

In Ruth Lick's office, we talk about these women. Ruth comes across immediately as being tough but fair, compassionate but realistic. A road supervisor for the Victoria City Police, Ruth did five years of plain-clothes work and knows the faces on the streets. She is also a court expert on street drugs.

"Women are mostly [on the street] because of attachments to boyfriends or men. What I'm seeing are girls on the street — I'm talking 12, 13, 14 — they don't have to be at home, so they are on the street. They get a boyfriend and he tends to lead her, Ruth explains. "I get girls from good homes — Gordon Head, Oak Bay — and they're doing B&E's [breaking and entering]."

They hang out downtown "because it's cool. Then they sleep in doorways and before you know it they are packing [transporting drugs] for the boyfriend. In my experience, they started out dealing in pot because they said 'Big deal, it should be legalized.' Next thing you know they're dealing coke and packing guns."

FACES OF THE HOMELESS

—Linda—

She's the matriarch of the street. Linda Jim, 37, has been on the street since she was 15. During that time she's been homeless off and on, usually depending upon whether or not she's drinking.

Linda says she's had to learn coping skills, many of which she's passed on to other women. She says streetlife is harder on women, especially those with children. It worries her that women on the street don't take care of themselves. Even when she's drinking, Linda makes sure she eats and keeps herself clean at StreetLink's facilities. Today she's dressed in immaculate jeans and a sweater.

Linda would like to see a place for people who are drunk to have an evening meal. "They can always come to StreetLink... but if they're drunk, they're politely turned away," she explains. "If StreetLink had a little private area where people who are drunk could come to eat, that would help a lot."

She also feels a women's shelter is needed. Many women, haunted by images of abuse and violence, will not go to existing shelters. Violence is always an issue. While most men on the street look after the women, there are always those driving around looking for trouble.

She recounts one episode where two guys in a pickup truck picked her up when she was drunk, drove to Esquimalt, raped and beat her and left her for dead. Although soft spoken, when she says that won't happen to her again, the tough edge to her voice belies her inner strength.

Like many streetkids today, Linda came to Victoria from Duncan to "just experience life. Four of my relatives used to live on the streets. I used to visit them down at the Apple Tree and finally I just stayed."

Linda started drinking at 14. She's had seven children; all have been taken into care. She says that while she knows she can't care for them herself, it's still devastating to lose them. Her youngest was taken by a social worker while Linda was still in the hospital.

She gazes out the window. "I was nursing him when Social Services came. He wasn't finished nursing and they took him right out of my arms.... After that man took my child, I wanted to kill him." Happily, her son now lives with her sister upisland.

Linda says she has no regrets about the drinking, but has lots that drinking has killed so many friends. She says she can quit anytime she wants. When we met at StreetLink, she'd been dry for a few months. She was living in an apartment but still did a daily walkabout to check on everyone, covering them up or bringing them food from the soup kitchen.

The spirit of family and community is evident in Linda. Called "Mom" by many people on the street, she volunteers at the Open Door and StreetLink when she's sober. And because she's dry, she's able to use the money not spent on alcohol to help others.

Says Linda, "I like to take people into my home and try to fatten them up. If they want to sober up, then I help them mellow out and nurse on a bottle, otherwise they can have a seizure." One friend died of a seizure in her arms. Altogether, Linda estimates that in 23 years, she's known over 200 people who have died on the streets of Victoria because of drugs or alcohol.

But despite all the casual talk, Linda openly says alcohol is her biggest enemy. She doesn't think she'll change because it would change who she is. Perhaps it's all she knows. And what would she say to young women just hitting the streets?

"This is not the right choice in this day and age. It is too dangerous."



Ruth blames the system for not getting kids off the streets. She cites Karen who's had social workers, parole officers and counsellors working to straighten her out, "but the lawyers get her off [in court] every time!" Ruth says, shaking her head. "I know it's costly to keep them in jail, but something has to work... violent crime is soaring, even in Victoria."

Ruth feels the methadone program isn't working and sees addicts either selling the methadone or supplementing it with street drugs.

Constable Ann Gantzer, a patrol officer, comes in. Ann says they're constantly dealing with runaways — "sleeping in parkades, anywhere." Her biggest frustration is that unless a minor is seen committing an offense, the police can't do anything about them.

She admits that makes her mad, "but society has become so permissive and it's affecting the kids."

Affordable Housing

Ruth and Ann take me to see what \$350 a month buys in rental accommodation in Victoria. In particular, I've asked to see 820 Fisgard Street, one of the infamous Apple Apartments.

I realize how serious my requests are as Ruth, in jeans and a shirt, straps on her shoulder holster and her badge under her jacket. Ann, in uniform, adds a night stick to her already jangling belt.

Driving in the dark patrol car, Ruth talks a little about herself. She's been on the force for 12 years, a self-described street cop. "That's my specialty and I really know the street," she says. "I love my job and I don't take my work home. With this department, you're an equal. There's no prejudice against women here."

Ruth talks about the building we are about to visit. The whole third floor is now vacant — the result of a police raid in December. Now cleaned up, 820 Fisgard was "the closest thing we had to a crack house in Victoria." She says taxis used to line up at the door, waiting for people to go in, shoot

Reprinted from Focus on Women, June 1992

up and leave again.

Ruth says the rent here for a 120 square foot room with a sink is \$300, \$350 if the room has a bathroom. Yet she can't see giving people more money for shelter (on social assistance). When the shelter allowance goes up, the landlords raise the rent. She feels that if the buildings were better maintained and had someone to help keep them clean, a better cross-section of low income people would be attracted and people would have more pride in where they live.

Approaching the building, Ruth asks a man loitering on the sidewalk if he lives here. Uncomfortable at being addressed by a cop, he looks away and says yes. Ruth asks if we can go in the building and he hands her his key. She inserts the key and swings open the heavy steel door.

A woman is drinking a can of beer in the dark, dingy corridor. Doreen is one of the skinniest women I've ever seen — emphasized by skin tight pants, a tight tee shirt and long straight hair.

I am impressed by the dance that takes place before my eyes. I see that Ruth and Doreen know each other on a first name basis. After a friendly embrace, Doreen offers us a beer. We decline. She asks Ruth how her horses are and if she is still riding lots (she is).

Ruth asks Doreen if she's keeping clean. Of course she says yes and that she hasn't used drugs in months. She shows us that her arms and breasts are free of needle marks and comments she hasn't needed to turn tricks, either. She proudly boasts that she has gained 30 pounds since she quit using and I wonder how she could possibly have been that much thinner. Ruth asks Doreen how old she is and I almost reel when she says 31 — she looks much older.

Ruth introduces Ann and me, and asks Doreen to show us her room. Doreen hedges and shifts uneasily. Ruth explains that I am doing an article and want to see what the rooms are like. Doreen is still very negative and assures us that she's straight,

there's nothing to see. Ruth says that isn't why we're here. Doreen says her room is a real mess because there was a fire down the hall from her and the guy's stuff is all in her room. We assure her that doesn't matter, we just want to see the size and condition of the building. She reluctantly acquiesces but says she has to go in first for a moment.

Climbing the steel staircase, I look at the concrete and walls and try to imagine if the building is more of a warehouse or a prison. Either way, it is cold, filthy and intimidating.

Outside Doreen's room stands a derelict fridge with the door hanging off. The walls and floor have been painted black so the dirt doesn't show and the distant florescent tube provides so little light that it wouldn't matter. She enters her room and leaves us waiting in the hall.

She comes back out and reluctantly waves us in. Ruth enters first and does a cursory look around. She tells me I can now have a look. Doreen is one of the "lucky" ones: she has a bathroom, although the top three-quarters of the door has been kicked off in a raid. The room contains a bed, a small counter with a sink and a few personal possessions. There is room for little else. The single light bulb reveals bare plaster walls and a minuscule window.

I am conscious of a human-shaped lump in her bed but am not going to be the one to bring it up. Ruth does.

After more careful dancing it is finally revealed that a young boy is hiding under Doreen's covers. Ann remembers that there is a warrant out for a missing juvenile, easily identified by a thigh-high cast. This boy has the telltale plaster and our evening tour is briefly interrupted to take him in to the police station on Fisgard Street.

Streetkids

While we wait for Ann to do the necessary paperwork, Ruth talks about streetkids like this boy. She's discouraged by what she sees as a revolving

door where hundreds go through the system over and over — about 30% girls and young women.

Back on the road, we cruise by McDonalds. Ruth points to two 13-year-old girls from Oak Bay.

"See those guys they're with? They're from Burnaby and have long criminal records." And so the cycle starts.

As we stop in front of McDonalds, several of the kids call hi to Ruth and wave. She calls hi back and knows most of their names. Circling around the main downtown core, Ruth points out the guy who runs little girls (juvenile prostitutes), the one who sells coke, the one who packs guns.

The coke dealers "know it's a game. They play it until it catches up with them."

I think that I will never look at downtown the same way again.

We pull over to the curb. Ruth calls out to a boy, about 14. She asks him to empty his bulging pockets. He hands her a Swiss army knife, a pack of matches, a handful of chocolate bars. She gives him a warning that the knife could be considered a concealed weapon.

They talk about his mom. Ruth has taken him home before. She asks what he's doing for money and he says he's going to get a job. She tells him that it's daffodil season and asks why doesn't he get his butt out to the fields.

Well, he doesn't have bus fare. Ruth digs in her pocket, produces a two dollar bill and says it's only for bus fare — she lives out by the fields and she'll be looking for him tomorrow. I believe her.

As we drive off, Ruth comments that getting to know the people takes time and effort.

Homeless but Harmless

Ruth knows the Apple Tree Gang, too, referring to them as "a nice enough bunch." It seems funny, but arriving at the Apple Tree at 8:30 pm in the pitch black scares me more than anywhere we've been.

Shining her headlights at this refuge under a bridge, we get out to explore where some of Victoria's most chronic alcoholics drink and sleep.

As we approach the old apple tree, a lone man stokes a campfire and hangs his laundry, obviously washed in the nearby water, to dry. He's heating some food in a pot. Ruth talks to him for a moment, asking his name and what he's been up to. She then asks who else is here. He says just so-and-so and his girlfriend sleeping in the old canopy. Somewhere, the locals have found an old truck canopy that they've dragged over for a sleeping shelter.

Ruth and I walk over to the apple tree, lighting the way with her flashlight. A tarpaulin is tied to the branches giving some semblance of shelter from the weather. Just days after our visit, a man dies here amid the Chinese cooking wine bottles. A garbage pail brims over and we step over what must be at least a hundred bottles. There's no-one around; most have probably gone to StreetLink or the Gateway shelters to sleep for the night.

"Their biggest problem is alcohol," Ruth says. "It's hard when you get to know some of the people. If there's a warrant, you have to bring them in."

She feels that the Gateway is the best thing that has happened for chronic alcoholics like the Apple Tree Gang and that Victoria could use another shelter like it. Ruth would like to see the hours changed, though. She gets frustrated that by the 8 pm opening time, many streetpeople are drunk and police either have put them in jail or let them lie, exposed, in the outdoors.

We roll back to the station on Fisgard and Ruth says it's time she got back to work. I numbly head for my car. In three hours, my view of the world has been set askew.

— Maggie Kerr-Southin

Reprinted from Focus on Women, June 1992

FACES OF THE HOMELESS

—Majick—

"I think all humans have hope, whether they recognize it or not. Looking back on it, it was hope that allowed me to survive." Majick Stirling has been banking on that hope for the last ten years to get her life together and beat the street.

After being put in many foster homes as a child, Majick eventually was labelled an unmanageable child and institutionalized for two years. When she was released, she hit the streets and sniffed glue, nail polish remover — used any drug she could get her hands on.

In 1978, she and a friend decided to see Canada. With the exception of a brief return in 1979, she hitchhiked around Canada until 1983 doing transient jobs for food and drug money. Majick learned how to use a knife and became cold and tough.

After she returned to Victoria, she realized that she had become suicidal and self-destructive. "I walked up to Victoria Mental Health and said I couldn't live like this anymore."

Majick was about to embark on the most difficult journey she had taken so far. For the next five years, she spent about half her time in the Eric Martin psychiatric unit.

"I call them my nightmare years. I found myself looking at my behaviour and knowing it was no longer acceptable.... I spent a lot of time walking around with swollen fists and black eyes — and I'd given them to myself."

Majick forced herself to join Narcotics Anonymous and make the decision to quit both street and prescription drugs. "When I entered the system, I was on the fringe of my black hole. I crawled into it and slowly crawled back out. There are still areas to work on."

Today, two therapists and a lot of hard work later, Majick is slowly getting her life together. She is a student at Camosun College and has been drug free for two years. Majick is unsure if she can maintain this lifestyle but adds with determination that she's set a five year goal and can't see changing her mind then.

It's been a difficult transition from street life where there are fewer responsibilities. Now there are bills to pay. She believes the majority of people stay on the street because they fear responsibility.

"When I first had my apartment I would go to the 9-10 Club everyday, to the Mustard Seed for food — I was just like a kid on the streets again," she explains. "Today I am so responsible it scares me."

She's frustrated by the Intent to Rent song and dance involved with finding housing. She feels that in many ways, the system designed to provide a little humanity often ends up dehumanizing people. She agrees that landlords fear people with mental illness and many people simply cannot find a place to live.

"When these people can't get good accommodation, they turn to street drugs or alcohol.... When you get them off the street, you have that secondary problem to deal with."

Yet Majick is grateful for all B.C. has to offer. The health care system, social assistance and student loans are all helping her get on with her new life.

"There are times when you've got to sit down and count your blessings. I was a forgotten person and I have spent the last two years speaking out for forgotten persons."



Reprinted from Focus on Women, June 1992

HOMELESS IN HARARE

The influx of people into urban areas is bringing a Western problem to many cities in sub-Saharan Africa: homelessness. As many as 3,000 people are homeless in Zimbabwe and prospects for improving their lot are dim, given rising unemployment and the high cost of housing.

By NINA SHAPIRO

For a year, more than 100 destitute people made their home a sprawling field at the edge of Harare. They slept in home made tents — thick sheets of plastic draped over frames of branches. They also built a latrine, a bath house, and even a shack which they made a schoolhouse for the 20 children among them.

Then, at 3 am one morning in mid-July, police raided the camp, leaving it in ashes. Its residents, and those of a smaller, less elaborate squatter camp, were taken to prison. After a barrage of criticism, the government released them within days. They soon found refuge on a church-owned farm outside Harare. But rather than remove these people from the public eye, the raid called attention to their plight and sparked a larger controversy surrounding the country's burgeoning homeless population.

Pressed to explain the action, city officials avoided accepting responsibility. This equivocation reflected the government's overall confusion when it comes to homelessness. The government, the raid made clear, has no coherent policy for dealing with the problem. For only a month before, a police official had said that the larger camp, in a neighborhood called Eastlea, was the only proper domicile for the city's homeless. In fact, camp residents reported that police had been rounding up street people in other parts of the city and bringing them there. Moreover, the city's health department was so impressed with the camp that it offered free care to all its residents.

Despite the lack of policy, homelessness is fast becoming a major problem. Until recently, it was a foreign concept in the largely rural, extended family-based societies of sub-Saharan Africa.

But rapid industrialization has brought to the region the problems of the urbanized world: unemployment, crime, overcrowding, and now homelessness.

Zimbabwe, a lush country of arable land and light industry which has been free of the extreme poverty so common in Africa, is perhaps one of the last places where homelessness has taken hold. Part of the confusion about the problem, evident in the general public as well as the government, stems from its newness. Unlike residents of the West who, over the past decade have grown used to seeing and hearing about the homeless, Zimbabweans are still figuring out who these people are that have cropped up on their clean, tree-lined streets. The very word, "homeless," is new to the Zimbabwean vocabulary and is just starting to be used to describe these people.

At night, they sleep in the railroad station or out in the open on the rambling, empty fields surrounding town. During the day, many head for the busy city center, where they earn money by standing guard over parked cars.

Ironically, the homeless here do not look as bedraggled as many do in wealthier Western countries. The warm climate and abundance of empty space eases the harshness of street life. Although there are noticeable exceptions, they appear healthier, physically and mentally, than their Western counterparts.

Until the raid, public concern focused on children wandering the streets. Now, people have come to realize that people of all ages are without homes.

The raid brought to light another surprising dimension of the homeless population: It includes whites. In a post-colonial country where fair skin is equated with wealth, many were shocked to learn that up to 10 whites lived at the camp.

However, their apparent alcoholism may be responsible for this situation. Nonetheless, their presence at the camp indicates a decay of white privilege. Such destitution among whites was unheard of at independence a decade ago.

Most of the whites at the camp were former Rhodesian Front soldiers and lived side by side with ex-liberation fighters. Virulent enemies only 10 years ago, now bonded by poverty, the two groups of former soldiers demonstrated an inter-racial brotherhood that is rare in this still largely segregated society. "We're all Africans," said one former Rhodesian soldier.

The camp, before the raid, showed how just an empty plot of land can dramatically improve the lives of the homeless. Its residents moved to the site after experiencing a similar raid last June at the railroad station, where they were then living. Believing themselves safe in the new location, after coming to what they thought was an agreement with local authorities that would allow them to stay, the group members turned into a community which had the feel of a rural village. Friends set up tents near each other. Women cooked sadza over outdoor fires. Some decorated their tents with flowerpots and planted vegetables in a common plot. Volunteer teachers, drawn to the camp, gave daily lessons in the schoolhouse and a tent was designated a "drop-in center" for all the city's street youth.

Spurred on by an Irish expatriate, who took an interest in their welfare and spent considerable time championing their cause, the group members also developed into an aggressive street-people's organization. They lobbied the government for agricultural land on which to resettle and tried to organize others of the approximately 30 homeless communities in the city. They became adept at public relations, alerting the press of their goings-on and distributing typed fact sheets about themselves. The publicity brought offers of assistance from non-governmental organizations, which donated food, clothes, and blankets.

A strong sense of community pride took hold. Giddy with their success and exuding an almost comical sense of purpose, camp residents elected a "government" and took to comparing the community to a sovereign state. A governing committee — which included health, security, and training officers — screened new arrivals as part of an "immigration" policy. The committee was so respected that it functioned as a kind of court over internal disputes.

Yet, the experience of camp members is far from typical among Zimbabwe's homeless. Although other groups have occupied pieces of land, none developed into a similar community or received much assistance. And it is likely that even the Eastlea group, without the intervention of the expatriate, would still be living like the rest of the country's homeless.

Most live without basic amenities. "We have no food, no home, no jobs, no nothing," said Phineas Muwata, a 60-year-old with a wooden leg who sleeps blanketless, in the railroad station.

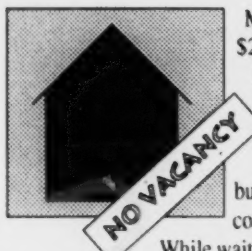
Aside from one soup kitchen, there are no social services for the homeless, not even a night-time shelter. Yet, homelessness is likely to reach major proportions in the foreseeable future.

"It's just getting worse and worse," said Diana Patel, a sociology professor at the University of Zimbabwe.

Five years ago, 15 people showed up when the Anglican church opened a soup kitchen. Today the kitchen serves up to 200 people a day.

There are no authoritative figures on the homeless yet, but experts estimate there are at least 3,000 in the country. This may not sound like much by Western standards, but a severe urban housing shortage portends a major growth in the homeless population. In Harare alone, a city of about 1 million, there are 60,000 people on the waiting list for government housing. The municipality only builds 5,000 houses a year.

"This would be bad enough if the population were static," said Alban Musekiwa, director of Housing and Community Services in Harare. "But our population is growing by 3 percent. We just can't build fast enough."



Moreover, 60 percent of those on the Harare waiting list earn less than \$207 a month, putting even the lowest cost houses beyond their reach. Rigorous municipal housing codes have kept prices high and the most basic house costs over \$5,000 to construct. Also, urban rents have skyrocketed in the past decade.

However, the city has relaxed some of its standards and is now building "shell-houses" — buildings with no windows or door frames that cost \$2,600. "We are trying everything," Musekiwa said.

While waiting for housing, many crowd into the homes of friends or relatives. In the poorer parts of town, as many as 30 people often share a two room house. Sleeping is done in shifts to get the most use out of beds, making jobs as night watchmen much sought after.

The housing crisis is a product of increasing urbanization. The former white minority government kept the urban population artificially low with laws prohibiting all blacks without jobs — the vast majority of the country — from living in the cities. The relaxation and eventual elimination of those laws launched an urban influx that outpaced the construction of new houses. And people continue to stream into the cities. The number of urban dwellers, currently 26 percent of the nation's 9.7 million, is expected to double in the next decade.

Ken Musanje, a 27-year-old leader of the Eastlea group, agrees. "I'm looking for a job and can't get it anywhere," he said. Musanje was laid off from a tobacco factory because of automation two years ago.

"There was a time that I couldn't get a single cent in my pocket," he said. "The owner was demanding rent. I even sold my belongings trying to get rent. I had nothing left." He was soon evicted. His parents, Zambian natives, had been killed in an automobile accident, leaving him with no place to turn.

The unemployment rate, estimated as high as 30 percent, is an unfortunate consequence of a post-independence mass education policy. The growth of an educated class, whose members no longer identify with peasant society, dramatically increased the number of people seeking jobs. But the economy, in many ways unchanged from colonial days, cannot absorb them all.

Finding themselves without employment, some return to their extended families in the rural villages. Yet others, second or third generation city residents, have lost contact with their rural roots. Still others, like Musanje — the children of immigrants fleeing war-torn or economically troubled nations — would not know where to look for their extended families. Moreover, extended families themselves are disintegrating under the pressures of modern life, including a growing divorce rate.

For Harare Mayor Simon Chikwavaire, the solution to homelessness is simple. "You don't live in the city if you don't have a job and can't afford a house. You should go and live in the rural areas," he said. As Chikwavaire accepted limited responsibility for the July raid, his words provide insight into the motive behind it, suggesting that it was an attempt to drive the homeless from the city.

This roughshod approach met with little approval. Even the government controlled newspaper, *The Herald*, deplored the action as inhumane. The police major, who led the raid and was seen driving up to the razed camp in a Mercedes, was singled out for particular criticism.

In addition, the raid, which came only weeks after South African authorities demolished a squatter camp in Soweto, made the government's criticism of its southern neighbor seem hypocritical. "What made this operation all the more revolting is that it made Zimbabwe look no better than South Africa," *The Herald* said.

Yet, the raid may have inadvertently led to some good for Zimbabwe's street people by raising public awareness of their existence. Even more significantly, it has generated insistent calls for a government policy on homelessness.

As for the Eastlea group, it is still hoping to be granted agricultural land. "All we want is to be like any other normal community," said Musanje. "We don't want to feel different from other people. I feel that if the government only gives us land, the problem might come to an end."

Copyright © 1990 by the African-American Institute.
Reprinted by permission of Africa Report.

A signal of alarm

Five million "street children" in Africa

They are the bad conscience of a model of development that has collapsed; of an urbanization process that has shattered traditional structures. They loiter in the streets, pilfer, clean windcreens, beg, or sell cigarettes. At night, when the cinemas close, they often form groups and sleep wherever they can find shelter. They are pursued by police, often manipulated by them, and frequently end up in prison. They are between 7 and 15 years old and have become known as the "street children".

Such children are not merely orphans or drop-outs, but the product of deep-seated trends and global forces which have subjected their families to intolerable stress. The force of their revolt leaves adults anxious, sometimes frightened, and, in the case of parents, ashamed.

Public authorities, rendered impotent by a problem they would rather not have to deal with, prefer to disguise it by using such categories as "disadvantaged children" or children "in difficulty". In the industrialized countries, they conjure up scenes from Dickens' "David Copperfield" and the industrial revolution. The phenomenon has been recognized for many years in Latin America, but is now starting to make its presence felt in Asia and even Africa, where, until recently, village and family solidarity kept it to a minimum. In Africa there are neither orphanages nor hostels: the family, clan or village is supposed to look after their most vulnerable members - the children and the aged. The available statistics are only approximate: "street children" by definition cannot be included in a population census and, apart from that, authorities generally try to minimise the problem. Despite this, the numbers indicate a disturbing increase in these children: 30 million around the world; five million in Africa. Yesterday, they were a footnote, today they constitute a real problem. If this trend is maintained, they will, tomorrow, be a blight on urban civilization.

In an effort to find a solution, Unesco and UNICEF organized two seminars, in Cotonou (Benin) from November 19-23 and in Nairobi (Kenya) from December 3-7 [1990]. The participants representing concerned NGOs and various governments targeted four objectives: examine available information on these children; to canvass human and material resources; formulate projects for the various organizations; and finally, draw up guidelines for national policies. The participants also went out into the shanty towns around Nairobi and Cotonou to meet and listen to these children: "These are children who have gone into revolt" explains Togolese anthropologist and Unesco programme specialist Amewusik Tay. "They have revolted against the adults in whom they see only a breakdown of ethical values. What do they want from adults? A little justice and a little love. It's not by repressing them that we are going to help their insertion into society..."

Unesco, working with UNICEF, and following on from the Education for All conference in Thailand last March, has put priority on the essential education requirements of these children, who will have no chance of changing their situation if these needs are not met.

Economy and demography

Today the causes of the phenomenon are better known. The Regional Director for UNICEF in West and Central Africa, Stanislas Adotevi, defines them as closely related to "the economic recession, constantly falling prices of commodities upon which the majority of our populations depend, while, at the same time, prices of manufactured products skyrocket. Not to mention high interest rates, the crushing foreign debt... the diminishing flow of foreign investment into our countries. In other words, accelerated impoverishment, reduced revenues and means of livelihood—all reflecting an economy in total collapse."

The causes, however, are not only economic. They are also demographic. According to the World Bank, the urban population growth rate averages an annual 8.5% in the 35 major capitals of Sub-Saharan Africa, which are doubling their inhabitants every nine years.

"The European model of development and urbanization has destroyed family structures," said Mr. Tay. "The traditional African house is round, inte-

grated. Modern architecture and apartment living no longer makes it possible for the grandmother or an uncle to be with the family. If the parents are not at home, children go onto the streets. African culture has disappeared from our big cities which, in addition, lack the social services available to city dwellers in the industrialized countries. Here, in Africa, it goes without saying that the child is

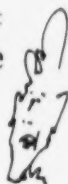
"These are children who have gone into revolt. They have revolted against the adults in whom they see only a breakdown of ethical values. What do they want from adults? A little justice and a little love."

future. For us, the existence of 'street children indicates moral degradation, the end of our traditional values."

The causes are also scholastic: the failure of education systems, the fact that they no longer fulfill their role and are inaccessible to vast numbers of children (the average rate of school enrollment in the Sahel is 51%) is accelerating the process. Inequality of opportunity, high rate of failure, marginalization and the inadequacy of schools to meet the needs of the population are seen as major factors in sending adolescents into the street.

"30 million street kids around the world! Just think about it!"

Graphic: Africa File, VIDEA



Rampant urbanization

On top of this, rampant urbanization, linked in part to the repeated droughts of recent years and consequent rural exodus, precipitates towards shanty towns and squatter settlements all those whom the country-side can no longer feed. The most vulnerable among these urban migrants are women and children. As increasingly high percentages of urban poor households are female-headed, and because the majority are involved in unprotected, irregular economic activity, earning meagre incomes for long hours of work, more and more urban poor households are forced to send their children to work as well to ensure the family's survival instead of offering them the education which they normally need.

The problems posed by these children are immense and the difficulties in dealing with the dilemma are innumerable (acute shortage of resources, inertia of governments, insufficient numbers of social workers and other trained personnel). The solutions must be global and, in the long run, of course, depend on an improvement in Africa's economic situation.

Meanwhile, a certain number of projects or corrective interventions by NGO's, governments or international agencies will, hopefully relieve the situation, at least in the short-term.

Reprinted from UNESCO Sources, January 1991

FACT SHEET ON STREET GIRLS

Prepared by Childhope, USA
The International Movement on
Behalf of Street Children

- Among the most vulnerable and exploited of the world's tens of millions of street children — a term that refers to children and youth ages 5 to 18 who work and/or live in city streets — are street girls.
- According to most studies conducted in developing countries, the majority of street children are boys, but a number of studies have shown a significant percentage of working street girls — girls who work on city streets, but return home every night.
- In Jamaica, a recent study found that 97 percent of children living on the streets were boys, and a similar study of street children in Bogota, Colombia, found that 98 percent were boys. In the Philippines, a study of children living and/or working in the streets determined that 19 percent were girls, although girls represented up to 40 percent of the working street child population in some areas.
- Similarly, a study in Asuncion, Paraguay, found that 12 percent of working street children were females. However, when children who worked in markets (either alongside their parents or alone) were counted in the survey, females made up 30 percent of the working street child population.
- Frequently, such studies fail to count girls as part of the working child population because they ignore those girls working in domestic settings, where the majority of girls and female adolescents in developing countries work. While girls working in domestic settings are not "working street children," they are nonetheless frequently out-of-school, contributing economically to their families, and receiving low wages for low skill work.
- A 1989 study conducted in Latin America with the support of CHILDHOPE found girls working in a variety of settings and occupations, both on and off the streets, as vendors, maids, waitresses, dishwashers, and prostitutes. Other girls were involved in begging, theft, scavenging in dumps, singing on street corners, carrying bags or luggage, and other manual labor.

- The majority of these girls and adolescents (ages seven to 18) worked on the streets or in other settings either full or part time, but continued to return home. The study also concluded that street girls are subject to greater risk of sexual exploitation than boys, as well as economic exploitation because of the shortage of occupational and income generating options due to their gender.

- Individual surveys in a number of countries in Latin America demonstrated that the lives of street girls and other working girls are characterized by early sexual initiation and abuse, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including AIDS, and unwanted pregnancies.

Frequently, such studies fail to count girls as part of the working child population because they ignore those girls working in domestic settings...

- In Costa Rica, for example, 24 percent of 50 working street girls (between the ages of eight and 17) interviewed reported that they had had sexual relations, and 83 percent of those reported that their first sexual encounter was against their will. The median age of first sexual relations was 11 years of age, with two of the girls reporting sexual relations as early as age eight. None of the cases of sexual abuse was reported to law enforcement authorities.

- Girls living on the streets were subject to even greater abuse. In Guatemala, 95 percent of 38 girls (ages 13 to 18) living on the streets reported that they had been sexually abused and 34 percent of the incidents involved strangers. Twenty-one of the 38 girls, or 55 percent, said they had been pregnant at least once. Eight of the 21 said they had had abortions, only one of which was conducted in a hospital or clinic. Eight of the 38 girls also reported having suffered from an STD.

- In Brazil, testing for HIV (the Human Immunodeficiency Virus that causes AIDS) by the Brazilian national welfare foundation found 70 out of 4,200 street youth (ages 12 to 15) to be HIV-positive. One fifth of those who tested positive were girls.

- A significant number of street girls work in brothels or on the streets as prostitutes, placing them at even higher risk of acquiring STDs,

including AIDS. One Brazilian advocacy group reports that there are more than 500,000 young women under the age of 20 working as prostitutes in Brazil.

- In the Philippines, an estimated 30 percent of Manila's 50,000 to 75,000 street children (both boys and girls), are involved in prostitution, and are among the highest paid of working street children, earning up to \$20 an hour for their services. Similarly, in Thailand, where 40,000 children under the age of 14 are estimated to be involved in prostitution, the price a brothel owner will pay for a young girl is roughly equal to one year's earnings for a poor Thai farmer.

- In Chile, economic stagnation in the 1980s caused thousands of girls to leave their low income, urban neighborhoods and work as prostitutes in central areas of Santiago, where they earned \$3 or \$4 per encounter.

- While the number of girls involved in prostitution or working on the streets in industrialized countries is much smaller, the numbers are nonetheless significant. In the United States, an estimated 125,000 to 200,000 teenage men and women become involved in prostitution each year, about two-thirds of whom are street youth.

- The majority of street girls, particularly those in developing countries, face an acute lack of basic health services. In Nicaragua, for example, 27 percent of 85 girls (ages 10 to 18) had been pregnant at least once, and 21 percent had suffered from an STD. Yet the majority of these girls said they had no access to health services, and the few who had obtained family planning services received them from older women friends or market vendors. Similarly, in Panama, where 10 out of 50 street girls (ages six to 17) said they had been pregnant, 74 percent of the girls said their were unaware of family planning methods.

- Street girls are frequently underserved with other services as well, such as education, vocational training, and shelter. CHILDHOPE found that 68 percent of street children's projects surveyed said they work with street girls, but only a handful focused on the specific needs of street girls.

- CHILDHOPE advocates on behalf of street girls by conducting action-oriented research into their needs, and working with governmental and non-governmental organizations to advocate on their behalf, and by supporting projects seeking to meet the specific needs of street girls.

Reprinted from a factsheet produced by
CHILDHOPE, March 1990

Street Movement

Some seven million youngsters under the age of 20 now make their living or live on the streets of Brazil. As their numbers grow, so does violence aimed at driving them out of their habitat. Now they are fighting back.

By Jon Christensen

Domingo Vieira, a skinny 15-year-old child of the streets, stretched to pin another star on the bulletin board. Each of the 34 stars represented a street kid, a friend who had been cut down by street violence in recent months in Belém, a city of one million residents at the mouth of the Amazon.

The memorial for the slain children of Brazil opened the second national meeting of the Brazilian Street Kids Movement, a gathering of more than 1,000 *meninos da rua* held recently in Brasília, the capital.

"These are just the ones we know about personally," said Domingo's friend, Valtemir Sales. "If we put up a star for all the street kids who have been killed, it would fill the sky."

Nearby, a panel of crime-page clippings documented the national tragedy which has claimed at least 1,397 young lives in recent years. In Belém alone, violent deaths claimed 54 lives of kids under 18 years of age. The worst violence has been in Rio de Janeiro's infamous northern suburbs, where 327 kids recently died.

But the violence affects more affluent neighborhoods too. In May, Patrício da Silva Hilário, a nine-year-old who made a living selling fruit outside a Copacabana supermarket, was found strangled in a doorway. A note pinned to his body read: "I killed you be-

cause you didn't study or produce anything."

While Patrício's mother attributed the murder to her son's refusal to work for drug dealers, the killer's message ended on a threatening note. "I'm going to kill the little ones who don't study or respect nature. I ask the government not to let the streets of the city be invaded by little robbers."

Some street kids are victims of the war between bandits and drug traffickers. Others are killed by the police, according to those human rights organizations that compile statistics of casualties. Many children are victims of

death squads manned by off-duty police officers. The Street Kids Movement claims at least 82 children were assassinated by death squads during the first six months of this year.

Brazil has no official death penalty, but around the country semi-official death squads are frequently reported upon in the newspapers and denounced by human rights groups.

"I'm not in favor of the death penalty; I'm in favor of death," a police chief in the state of Bahia recently commented during a televised debate on capital punishment.

Almost every major Brazilian city has been rocked by scandals linking police to death squads. In some cities *justiceiros* (vigilantes), paid by store owners who want to clean the streets of "little robbers," have openly taken the law into their own hands. Human rights organizations charge that these cities have encouraged violence against street kids.

"During the military dictatorship, you could denounce killings and beatings as human rights violations," says Benedito Rodriguez, national coordina-

tor of the Street Kids Movement. "A lot of people now think it's all right to teach kids a lesson."

Throughout Brazil, street kids are now organizing to change the nega-

tive image society has of them. They are denouncing police and gang violence, and demanding better working conditions for kids who try to survive apart from crime and drug wars. Between 7 and 10 million kids under 20 work on city streets in Brazil and their numbers are growing. Sixteen years ago, the Republic of Little Vendors, a self-help organization founded in Belém by a priest, found 500 kids on the streets. Today, in just one open-air market, more than 1,000 boys and girls are looking for money.

The idea of a national meeting was born when the Repub-

"If we put a star up for all the street kids who have been killed, it would fill the sky."

lic of Little Vendors sent a letter several years ago to similar organizations sprouting up around the country suggesting a gathering in Brasilia. The Street Kids Movement was founded in 1985, held its first national meeting a year later, and now claims close to one million kids and 3,000 street counselors and educators as members.

Last year the Street Kids Movement helped get inclusion of children's rights in Brazil's new constitution. But the real challenge is turning the sentiment of this legislation into deeds on the streets.

Early one morning recently, Domingo Vieira pushed through the crowds at the Ver-O-Peso fish market on the riverfront, hawking sacks that his mother makes from recycled cement bags. "Watch out, those kids are robbers," a plump herb vendor hissed.

"We don't like to be called robbers," Domingo sighed. "We're working, just like everybody else."

Thief isn't the only word used to describe street kids in Brazil. *Marginal, criminoso, malandro, trombadinha, pivete* there are at least a dozen derogatory terms for those who make their living or simply live on the streets.

"The image of street kids is a caricature which doesn't fit the reality," says Vendito Rodriguez. "Yet it serves as justification for the violence against the kids."

Like Domingo, most street kids maintain strong family ties, Rodriguez says. They work long days in the streets, but they go home to eat and sleep. Even among the estimated seven million children officially classified as "abandoned" by the state reformatory system, most are not orphans, according to Rodriguez. "Their families don't

have the conditions to support them. They're abandoned by society, not their families."

It's a myth that most are robbers and assaulters, he adds. "Less than one per cent are law breakers, but that small group grabs all the attention."

Street kids readily admit that many make a living by any means possible. Domingo and his friends warn each other of the thieves in

their midst as often as they speak about the police or government inspectors who crack down on unlicensed vendors.

Girls face particular hardships. "The main violence for us is sexual," says Maria Edinete Amaral, 13. "The police and inspectors point at us. Sometimes we're forced to 'go out'

"I'm glad to hear that they're not taking this lying down. What can I do to help?"



Graphic: Africa File, VIDEA

with them."

Along with a majority of Brazilian vendors, Domingo Vieira has joined the workforce out of necessity. Working mornings selling sacks, he makes an important contribution to his family's income: roughly the minimum wage of almost US\$40 a month.

Around lunch time at Ver-O-Peso, Domingo greets the ward - who sells crabs and Zé Bouquet who hawks bundles of cilantro, parsley and hot peppers to spice up seafood dishes. The group of friends walk from the market to a nearby parochial school, where the Republic of Little Vendors sponsors a hot meal program.

While waiting turns for lunch the boys go full-out in a rotating soccer match. Jeronimo Pires, a 20-year-old street counselor who himself grew up in the streets, says "the best thing about the movement is that the kids learn to think of themselves as workers, and know the importance of their work."

He adds, "They get the chance to enjoy themselves as kids and play too."

Reprinted from Third World, July 1990 with permission of Pacific New Service

The cardboard box - cheap to build - easy to extend - it won't last long.. but what does these days?



Graphic: New Internationalist, March 1990

The children of Smokey Mountain

Smokey Mountain is a smouldering garbage dump 200 metres high covering an area of 20 hectares on the outskirts of Manila. It is also a playground and workplace for the children of the surrounding slums.

Some 900 children make a living on the dump scavenging for reusable bits of plastic, glass and metal.

Smokey Mountain is about all they know of life. Few have seen anything else. The burning rubbish tip is their childhood and their livelihood. It threatens to be their only destiny too, for half a day's work on the dump yields the equivalent of a 10-hour shift in a factory. With only rudimentary schooling, they have little option but to become professional scavengers like their parents.

Some will not make it that far. Four children have died of tetanus in recent months. Two have been run down by bulldozers. Many suffered cuts and burns, and all are affected by the acrid smoke.

An alternative is taking shape, however. A joint project has been launched by the Philippine Department of Labour and Employment and the International Labour Organisation, with Financing from the Netherlands. Its objective: to make the present bearable and the future more promising for the children of the dump.

The project has conceived an integrated programme of protection, learning, earning and value-formation activities. Protective services, the first and most immediate need, provide health, nutritional and social programmes for children not yet removed from work on the dump. A protected work component allow for the immediate removal of children from the hazards of scavenging. Vocational training and non-formal education are brought in to play to equip them with employable skills, followed by support for formal schooling. Value-formation activities promote self-worth and identity, discipline and self-reliance. Finally - and when all these components are operational - will come a programme to help parents find a more stable source of income to meet the family's basic needs.

After months of preparation that included contacts with families and coordination with community groups and non-governmental organisations active in the locality, the project moved into action last year by opening a drop-in centre in the heart of the dump site, where the garbage trucks unload and the scavengers congregate. Here the youngsters can find drinking water, a free lunch, a safe place to play and rest, first-aid attention and informal counselling.

The programme as a whole began to take tangible form with the creation of a community productive school or as it is called by the Smokey Mountain folk, the Sabana, a Tagalog acronym meaning "a sheltered place for children to learn". Located in a rented apartment at the foot of the mountain, the Sabana has rapidly become the powerhouse of the project. Staffed by trained educators from the community, it houses the services for both children who are still working and those who are willing to stop. These include the first income-generating activity - painting and selling T-shirts - non-formal schooling in basic literacy and numeracy, back-to-school support in the form of tutoring, parent/teacher counselling and the organisation of scholarships. A vigorous recreational "exploration" programme has been set in motion to take children out into the brighter world beyond the smoke.

Community self-help is the core of the philosophy. Existing services and resources of national and city agencies and NGOs are tapped, but above all it is the participation of local staff and volunteers, and the contact they have with the people, which guarantees a self-sustaining operation in the long run. The ILO's role, explains technical adviser Susan Gunn - an American anthropologist with field



experience on three continents - is chiefly to co-ordinate it all.

Although the day-to-day job at Smokey Mountain is a demanding one, the project also looks further afield. Research is seeking out the root causes of child labour and determining its extent and severity. A public information campaign is creating a deeper awareness of the plight of children in hazardous work. And efforts will be made to reinforce the capability of government agencies, and notably the Labour Department, to enforce legislation and mount programmes on child labour.

Is it succeeding? Ask nine-year-old Andoy, who has quit the dump and now designs T-shirts at the Sabana. His favourite painting shows a water buffalo in a green field, though in fact he has never seen either a buffalo or a field. Will he be a scavenger when he grows up? By way of an answer, he draws himself as the pilot of a green helicopter, flying through a clear, blue, non-Smokey sky.

Reprinted from ILO
Information, No.1, 1991

SLUMS AND SHANTYTOWNS

The Squatter-builders of Lima

by Anna Wagner de Reyna

Squatter settlements — the so-called “spontaneous” districts — began to proliferate in Lima shortly after the Second World War. They were the result of an influx of population brought about by internal migrations, a shortage of dwellings for the poorer classes, and the lack of any coherent social housing policy.

What distinguishes these settlements from the other residential districts of the Peruvian capital is the fact that they were built by their own residents, without any external financial support and in contravention of existing property laws and urban housing standards. The land on which they are constructed was usually acquired illegally, sometimes simply by occupation, and the normal sequence of urban planning was reversed: people moved onto the site before the buildings went up, and only later were the dwellings provided with services and legally acquired by their occupants.

It is a very special kind of urban development. Whole neighbourhoods, built by the poor themselves, spring up suddenly, sometimes within hours, and then remain unfinished for years on end. They are precariously built and inadequately equipped — characteristics that won the name “spontaneous” for this new form of urbanization.

According to the dictionary definition, the term “spontaneous” implies something impulsive and uncalculated, instinctive and unconstrained. However, none of these epithets applies to the squatter-builder settlements of Lima,

which have a rigour and a coherence that sit uneasily with any suggestion of unconscious or unconsidered activity. Nor are the districts spontaneous in the sense of following the dictates of nature rather than culture, for they fit into a historical and cultural context. They are, in fact, a response by the needy to the failings of public and private housing policy.

The roots of popular urbanism

Even a hasty glance reveals that the districts follow a methodical plan, usually a grid pattern. Roads meet at right angles, and are often grouped around a central square known as the plaza de armas — the parade-ground.

On the level ground on the city's outskirts, this chessboard model is systematically applied. Wide, straight roads delineate squares and rectangles. A similar pattern is repeated on the hillsides wherever the lie of the land permits. The square at the centre of the grid is the site of principal public buildings such as the church, the school, and the town hall. Land set aside at the start of the project allows room for the settlement to grow and provides some green spaces, although in time these often disappear to make more room for housing.

The urban grid pattern with a central square has great symbolic significance in South America, since it was used by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century as part of their efforts to organize and pacify their newly-conquered territories. With the exception of a few ports and mining centres, the ground plans of almost all the towns and cities founded by the Spaniards were as regular as chessboards.

There was nothing spontaneous about this form of urbanism. It was the result of careful calculation that found its clearest expression in 1681, during the reign of the Spanish King Charles II, in a widely-circulated compendium of laws relating to the Indies, in which the chessboard model was prescribed as the only conceivable form of urban layout. Earlier directives, including one promulgated by Philip II in 1573, had already recommended this arrangement as a model both for Spanish and Indian communities.

At that time the grid pattern was a response to important strategic imperatives. With its central plaza de armas, it seemed in the first place almost a replica of the military camps to which the Spaniards were accustomed to withdraw when trouble threatened. Besides having purely military uses, however, the grid was part of an attempt to instill in the overseas territories a rigorous social organization of which the underlying assumptions were order, unity and cohesion. In spite of their vast numerical inferiority, the Spaniards would succeed through this urban model in imposing on the indigenous peoples the image of a people strong in its discipline, organization and efficiency.

Today the same simple ideas have re-emerged, inspiring a similar solution to the problems of development. The motives are, after all, analogous: the need to bring order to a piece of land.

Bending the rules

The communities of squatter-builders contravene the law, not

only because the land they build on has not been legally acquired but also because they flout the planning regulations by which a district has to be equipped with basic services before it can be settled. The would-be residents have to organize themselves to circumvent the rules.

A typical group of squatter-builders consists of a nucleus of families which either come from the same part of Lima or from the same part of the country. The first problem is to choose a site. To minimize the risks, they usually choose vacant land in public ownership, since the state is more likely to tolerate an occupation than private landowners, who generally fight vigorously to defend their property. The squatters normally need the backing of a well placed politician or civil servant, who can suggest possible sites to them. The families then choose leaders to take charge of the operation, for occupying the land involves co-ordinated collective action. Moving in is not an initiative for individuals but a communal task demanding concerted action by all the members of the group.

The next stage is to draw up a plan outlining residential zones and public spaces, shared amenities and land reserved for future extensions.

The families are given advance notice of the timing of the occupation, and each has specific jobs assigned to it. An advance guard, most of which are men, moves in to take possession of the land, with the women and children providing back-up. The group must then stay put, both to prevent other families coveting the same site from moving in and to resist any reprisals by the forces of order.

The blueprint for the district is immediately traced out on the ground. Individual lots are assigned, and temporary shelters made out of rush matting are erected on each one. The whole operation must be carried out quickly, simply and in good order, for an immediate, visible occupation of the district reduces the risks of subsequent expulsion.

Life soon begins to get organized in the precarious encampments. Those in charge arrange for trucks to deliver water, and do their best to see that public transport starts to serve the new district. The residents set about constructing housing units and public amenities. At best it takes ten to fifteen years before the infrastructure of a new residential district is completed. The risk of eviction slows the process even more. Districts where people lack security of tenure develop two or three times more slowly than those where they enjoy such tenure. Consequently, the organizers go to great lengths to win recognition of their title to the annexed land. Usually they form alliances with political parties that promise them legal right to the land in return for votes.

The social organization that enabled the land to be occupied and divided up and allowed houses to be built and services to be provided, evolves to cope with the new problems facing the community. The organizers' job is no longer just to defend land illegally acquired; now they must also handle the day-to-day administration of the district. Their goal is to raise the living standards of the residents, for example by sorting out problems caused by the division of the land, as well as to maintain order and see that the rules that guarantee the solidarity and cohesion of the community are respected. Transgressors are severely punished. Families that refuse to participate in a collective endeavour like building a school are not allowed to send their children to that school. Local tribunals deal with thefts, muggings and other crimes.

A new urban model?

Right from the start, the state passively encouraged the growth of the squatter settlements, firstly by failing to provide any effective alternative social housing policy and subsequently by tolerating and eventually legalizing them.

The first legal attempt to deal with them dates from 1961, fifteen years after the earliest communities had sprung up. That law was

..... inspired more by political and electoral considerations than by any considered policy of resolving the housing problems of the poor. Its authors sought primarily either to win votes or to bring some order to the question of land ownership in the capital. In 1984, however, the city authorities made an attempt to adopt the squatters' methods in developing its own social housing programme. The mayor decided to make land available to a group of families that was already organized to take advantage of it. Realizing the impossibility of handing over the land through accepted legal channels, he simply allowed them to go ahead and occupy it.



Graphic: The Africa File, VIDEA

So perhaps the word "spontaneous" is no longer really appropriate for these settlements. Drawing on the traditions of the Spanish conquest and with a social organization comparable to that of conventional society, Lima's squatter communities have proved efficient enough to challenge traditional assumptions of urban development, and finally have forced the powers-that-be to accept their methods as a viable solution to the problems of popular housing.

Reprinted from UNESCO Courier, January 1991

Slums are Not a Dead End

By Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar

For years people have been complaining about the explosion of slums in our cities. Every day, hundreds of new rural immigrants pour into our big urban centres and build shanty towns having no water or sanitation. Their influx has brought with it congestion, pollution and filth on an unprecedented scale. Numerous supposedly enlightened people want to put a stop to this. But the main problem lies in the vision of the elite, not in the slums themselves.

As it turns out, the immigrants enjoy better access to medical care, education and entertainment than they could ever dream of in their villages. The caste barriers that stop the lower castes in rural areas from rising are much less evident in cities. Opportunities for well-paid work, self-employment and a whole range of economic opportunities are far greater in the cities than in villages. The rural poor do not regard shanties as ideal accommodation, of course, but this disadvantage is minor compared to the great gains they have made.

The losers from the slum explosion are the urban elite. They find that the streets are too crowded for them to drive cars fast. Public parks and pavements turned into shanty towns offend them. The air sinks of refuse. They decry this as urban decay. But this is a special form of decay that benefits tens of



Photo: IDRC Reports, April 1991

A Slum in Bombay, India is not all that different from other Slums around the world.

millions of the wretchedly poor at the expense of the elite. It spreads urban benefits and rural wretchedness more evenly. Access to urban facilities is no longer monopolized by the elite but appropriated increasingly by poor rural immigrants, and the insanitary conditions of rural India are spreading to enclaves inhabited by the urban elite.

This is not, of course, an ideal state of affairs. It would be far better if we had honest politicians, honest municipalities and honest taxpayers willing to assist the poor on a massive scale. But since we don't, we have to look at second-best solutions.

The slum explosion is one of them. Of all our cities,

Calcutta is undoubtedly the most miserable. And of all Calcutta's poor, the most wretched must include the homeless, those that do not have even a roof over their heads. A study of such shelterless Calcuttans by Jagannathan and Halder is revealing.

It shows that the vast majority of the homeless live above the poverty line. And no less than 36 per cent remit cash to their villages: So even the most wretched of the immigrants have greatly improved their incomes. And the social mobility and economic opportunities available in Bombay and Delhi mean that it is commonplace to find TV sets in shanties, sometimes even video tape

recorders.

Ah, say the elite, but the living conditions in these slums have deteriorated dreadfully, with more uncollected refuse, bacteria and flies than ever before. Such living conditions do appear horrific to any visitor. But even in the worst slums, infant mortality has halved and life expectancy has doubled since independence. The wretched in urban slums are in many cases better off than the wretched in village hovels, who have no access to health care or preventive medicine, and whose wells can be more polluted than urban pumpsets.

The urban elite say, let's give better facilities to villages to prevent further migration. Romantic pastoralism sounds good but will not work in India. We have 800 million people but only 160

Prosperity comes through increasing the productivity of the work force, and both manufacturing and service industries are far more productive than agriculture. That is why prosperity in the West was accompanied by urbanization - cities are high productivity centres that can yield far higher incomes than farming.

Denmark is a country that rose to prosperity mainly on the basis of successful agriculture. Yet even in Denmark the urban population is 86 per cent of the total. What this shows is that successful agriculture inevitably leads to rapid urbanisation. It should surprise nobody that Punjab — the breadbasket of India — has one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the nation.

One study of Zaffarabad, a slum in East Delhi, reveals that the locals call it "Mini-Japan." It is a stinking filthy hell of a place with no municipal facilities, but it is alive with workshops. According to Syed Sahed, the Pradhan (chief) of this stinking hole, "Ours is a settlement of 40,000 people with one hundred per cent employment. Every family has its own business, every man is known for his product."

They know, even if the urban elite does not, that the shanty town looks like a problem but is really a solution. The shanty town provides basic shelter of the kind that best fits the immigrants struggling up the income ladder. They know Zaffarabad and Japan are a century apart, but they can still see where the stinking hovels of Zaffarabad will ultimately lead to.

By all means let us have more slum improvement. We need to provide slums with sanitation and drinking water. We need

to start schools and primary health centres and create bus services linking slums to city centres. But we must not get hung up on the mere existence of slums, which produce more winners than losers. Let us remember that neither romantic pastoralism nor urban elitism can lead to prosperity. The slum explosion will.

It is a stinking filthy hell of a place with no municipal facilities, but it is alive with workshops. According to Syed Sahed, the Pradhan (chief) of this stinking hole, "Ours is a settlement of 40,000 people with one hundred per cent employment. Every family has its own business, every man is known for his product."

Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar has been a journalist ever

since completing his formal education with a B.Sc degree from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and a B.A. from Magdalen College, Oxford. He is Editor of the Financial Express in Bombay.

million hectares of arable land — just one-fifth of a hectare per person. Even with land reforms, poor farmers will never be able to pull themselves out of the poverty trap. Only urbanization can ensure decent living standards.

Reprinted from World Development Magazine, March 1990

Offending the eyes of the Mighty

When the Olympics came to South Korea, the poor had to be removed from view. The same happened in Bangkok when the IMF and World Bank came to town. But where did the squatters end up? Stephen Webb tells a tale of two families.

Shin Ko wakes shivering with fear and calls for her husband. Evicted from three homes in the past four years, she lives in dread of another demolition crew throwing her family onto Seoul's uncaring streets, of again seeing her husband beaten by thugs with iron bars.

South Korea's government has brutally 'redeveloped' her life, demolishing it along with the walls of her home and leaving only the debris of empty cans, cardboard boxes, letters, rags and shoes.

Shin Ko was a victim of the 1988 Olympic Games, which were preceded by a mass eviction programme. Hundreds of thousands of Seoul's poorest people were forcibly removed so that a new Olympic village could be built. Shin Ko's home was bulldozed because it was visible from the path to be taken by the Olympic torch.

But this was not her first eviction. The first was in 1987 when the demolition force came with knives, baseball bats and iron bars. Riot police arrested those who resisted - like her brother, a construction worker, who was imprisoned for eight months.

... the demolition force came with knives, baseball bats and iron bars. Riot police arrested those who resisted....

Since the Olympics the family has been evicted again in one of the most violent clearances of recent years. Shin Ko and her husband were one of 800 families attacked without warning at four in the morning by 5,000 police and knife-wielding thugs who drove them from their squatter settlement around the Supreme Court of Justice.

Shin Ko's experience is far from unusual in the Third World, where rural people have been flocking to the cities for decades, drawn by higher-paying jobs and the prospect of better education for their children. As cities have become more overcrowded, land prices have rocketed, leaving the poor with no alternative but to resort to squatting. This is now one of the main forms of housing in many developing countries; between 20 and 40 per cent of people in the world's largest cities are squatters. And the situation is likely to worsen over the next decade, with over 300 million poor people expected to move into Asia's cities. Governments find it hard to provide the new arrivals with the basic services they need - and all too often their response is simply to clear the poor out of the way. Take Bangkok. Here, as in Seoul, evictions have increased dramatically in scale and severity during the past five years. At least 10,000 people are evicted annually without compensation and there are 1.3 million people in slums or squatter settlements who live in constant fear of eviction.

The Thai Government is committed to broadening home ownership to include more middle-class people and regularly employed blue-collar workers. But the poor have been left to the mercy of the property market. While well-off families often own more than one home, the cost of even the cheapest new housing is well beyond the reach of the two million urban poor.

So they rent in slum areas - like that near the new Convention Centre where the IMF and the World Bank met in October 1991. Prior to the meeting Bangkok newspapers reported that 647 families or over 2000 slum dwellers were to be evicted because, according to the authorities, the slums were a 'good hiding place for terrorists'. Bangkok's Deputy Governor said the slums were an eyesore and would shame the country in the eyes of foreign delegates.

The Government initially set aside no land for relocation of the small community and allowed for no compensation. But at the last minute slum dwellers were given \$240 and told to rent land cleared on state-railway property out of sight of the Conference Centre. While her husband struggled to build a new home on this land, Noi and her six-month-old daughter found themselves sheltering under an expressway with 60 other families. Her house had been cleared to make way for a shortcut to ease traffic during the IMF/World Bank deliberations.

Huddled in a tent, Noi's baby developed respiratory problems caused by the combination of damp with dust and fumes from the expressway. The authorities reneged on their promise to provide water and electricity. Sanitary conditions soon deteriorated. And Noi's family went into debt when her husband missed work while building their new house. Today the house is still only half built. Noi remains in the tents with her children, apprehensive about the future.

Shin Ko and Noi are just two among hundreds of thousands. If they could speak directly to their governments, they would doubtless try to explain that shelter is a basic human need. Without it, everything else from schooling to health care becomes impossible. But governments see only the numbers on the page; see only the eyesores which must be removed from view in the interests of international respectability.

Stephen Webb is an Australian journalist who specializes in South-East Asian affairs.

Reprinted from New Internationalist,
March 1992

"SPARC" OF HOPE FOR INDIA'S SLUM DWELLERS

"Home" for the more than 100,000 pavement dwellers of Bombay, India, is a leaky shelter haphazardly located on busy city streets. Women here live in two kinds of poverty - the economic impoverishment of marginal incomes and the equally oppressive social neglect of municipal authorities.

But an IDRC-sponsored project is actively involved in changing this situation. "Women and Urban Poverty" is a project by a group called SPARC — Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres. It is a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that works directly with the urban poor in cities like Bombay. SPARC's dynamism lies in its ability to act not merely as an advisory body but as a tool for the empowerment of local women.

"Before our organization was set up, when a woman saw a policeman her hand went into her pocket to see how much she had to bribe him," SPARC director Sheela Patel says. "Now she goes to a police station and is offered a cup of tea."

Teaching pavement and slum dwellers about their rights in the face of authority is one of the key objectives of this SPARC project. Indeed, it was the arbitrary removal of pavement dwellers' property by the Bombay Municipal Corporation that led to the creation of SPARC.

In 1981, the municipality decided that pavement dwellings were illegal and started demolition and eviction drives. Civil liberties groups took the matter to court and were able to secure a stay on demolitions.

In 1985, however, the Supreme Court withdrew the stay and gave the state the right to remove the dwellings.

It was during this period that a group of people from such diverse backgrounds as counselling, community health, child welfare, and biomedical science decided to form SPARC. "Most of us had worked with other

institutions in the area and found the welfare approach did not work," Patel says. "The attitude of the government welfare agencies is one of hesitation in taking up the issue of pavement dwellers." But SPARC took on the task and the results have been impressive.

The SPARC team covered 6000 households and nearly 27,000 individual slum and pavement dwellers, asking questions about background, income, family structures, and other things that no one had bothered to find out before. They formed an information base to chart out the requirements of pavement dwellers.

They quickly realized that women needed knowledge about access to certain necessities. Most women, they found, were unskilled migrants from rural areas of India. They were unable to tackle day-to-day problems like admitting a sick child to hospital or talking to municipal authorities.

SPARC workers taught pavement dwellers how to fill out ration cards (which provide access to subsidized foodgrain) and bank loan and electricity forms. In addition to giving families cheaper food, ration cards also establish identity and a place of residence. This is critical for those squatting on government land hoping to get legal ownership of a small plot.

In the wake of slum demolitions, women

have begun to become increasingly aware of, and militant about, their legal entitlements.

In 1989, a group of women pavement dwellers in the "E ward" slum took the municipality of Bombay to court over demolition of

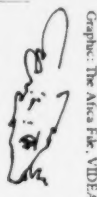
a number of street shelters. Trained by SPARC, the women had noted the number of the municipality van that took their belongings away and made a detailed list of goods taken from each dwelling. The women won their case and were given back their property. "Nobody believed we could organize slum dwellers on such a large scale," Patel says.

"No one listens to us when we are alone but now we are organized and strong. Singly, we were thin sticks which could easily be broken — together we are like a thick, unbreakable bundle."

SPARC was also instrumental in creating Mahila Milan, an organization designed to create a stronger lobby force for women pavement dwellers. It began in the "E ward" slum and moved to other impoverished areas of Bombay like Dharavi, Wadala, Goregaon, Mankhurd, and Chembur.

"Nobody listens to us when we are alone

"It seems to me that the best type of aid works *with* the people that it's trying to help; the best help is self-help."



Graphic: The Asia Film Video

but now we are organized and strong," says Laxmi Naidu, a resident of the "E ward" slum in Bombay and Mahila Milan member. "Singly, we were thin sticks which could easily be broken - together we are like a thick, unbreakable bundle."

One aspect of this unity is the encouragement by Mahila Milan of savings for housing - the largest single problem of pavement dwellers. Representatives like Leela Naidu collect small savings from the members each month and deposit them in a common housing fund.

"No matter how small the amount, the collective savings add up over a period of time," Naidu says. "In 4 years we have saved up RS450,000 (US\$25,000) for housing."

The women also put together about RS40,000 (US\$2,222) for daily emergencies. Whenever a member needs money for medicine, goods to sell, or children's schoolbooks or clothes they can borrow it from the account at a nominal interest rate.

The loan scheme is useful because many of the women in the pavement dwellings survive on extremely limited incomes. According to SPARC surveys, 74% of the slum dwellers earn less than the minimum wage of RS18 per hour (US\$1). Women make up 27% of the workforce but more than 90% earn less than the minimum wage.

With SPARC's help, Mahila Milan has started income-generation projects for women, teaching them to stitch and to make files, folders, and decorative items. Adult education classes are also offered.

But the economic barriers confronting

women slum dwellers are just one part of the overall problem in urban planning, according to SPARC coordinator Mithu Gupta. "Whenever resettlement plans are made, the houses are designed according to middle class perceptions of urban living," she says. The leader of the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF), A. Jockin echoes this thought. "Urban planners decide arbitrarily what is good for the poor, based on global patterns. But this macrolevel planning often does not synchronize with the needs of the urban poor."

The NSDF works with SPARC in research, negotiation, and other activities. Jockin believes that the way to fight municipal and urban planning ignorance is to help slum dwellers participate in decisions regarding policy and implementation. "The groups among the pavement dwellers have certain resource limitations," he says. "So we take over."

Jockin recounts one example where the NSDF and SPARC participated in meetings related to a World Bank project for adequate housing for the poor. "Our coordination with SPARC allowed 10,000 people to apply for housing in the project," he says. "On their own, local people would not have known how to complete the formalities."

Jockin also notes how collaboration has given NSDF new perspectives. "Until recently organizations like ours were male dominated," he says. "We only used women for demonstrations. But now we want them to take leadership roles."

Women's assumption of leadership roles in negotiation with authority is one of the key benefits of this SPARC project. Patel says government and municipal authorities are grudgingly but increasingly supportive of the plight of pavement dwellers. "The whole idea of SPARC and this project is to get women on the negotiation table and to create relationships in which we can argue our position extensively," she says.

"We see our role as one of education on both sides. The officials are learning to negotiate with the poor and vice versa."

Deepa Gahlot is a freelance writer based in India

Reprinted from IDRC Reports, April 1991

SUPER BARRIO TO THE RESCUE

by Lucy Conger

Dressed in screaming red and yellow wrestler's tights, a masked man prowls the corridors of power of Mexico City. With every ripple of his cape, he sends shockwaves through the government bureaucracy and advances another step toward winning another housing battle for the city's burgeoning population of slumdwellers.

The mystery marauder is SuperBarrio Gómez, the self-appointed defender of Mexico City's poor and homeless. This new folk hero is a combination of Superman and El Santo, a free-style wrestling champion who was hugely popular throughout Mexico City's inner city neighbourhoods where residents are crazy for the sport. It is no accident that SuperBarrio wears such bright colours: red is for combativeness and strength, and yellow is for the sun of hope.

Never without his mask ("It's my kryptonite", he explained in a recent interview), SuperBarrio can sweep into a government office and demand that housing officials release credits to citizens' groups that qualify for aid. Bureaucrats know SuperBarrio, and they know him as a tenacious defender of Mexico City's often invisible poor and needy. The masked man gets action where ordinary citizens would face an uphill fight.

SuperBarrio arose from the rubble left by the 1985 earthquake that destroyed lowerclass neighbourhoods in the heart of the Mexican capital. With city services stretched beyond their limits, and poor citizens increasingly marginalized, SuperBarrio quickly caught on to become the mascot of the Asamblea de Barrios, a citywide group of neighbourhood organizations that now represents 20,000 families who are fighting to obtain housing credits and to stave off evictions. In a short time, the friendly protector has become a peaceful and powerful urban warrior who stimulates community organization and acts as a social conscience for Mexico City. In countless public appearances, SuperBarrio promotes awareness of a wide range of civic issues from the use of condoms to prevent AIDS to forming poll-watching groups to prevent election fraud.

"For us SuperBarrio is a social wrestler - he comes to take up our causes", says Teresa Martinez, coordinator of the Barrio Defense Committee that is active in Colonia Guerrero, an inner city neighbourhood where many residents lost their housing in the earthquake or are at risk of being evicted. "Some authorities are afraid of him", says Martinez. "So when we want to make an important negotiation, we invite him."

In sprawling Mexico City - the world's largest city - SuperBarrio seems to be everywhere at once. Most people resign themselves to several hours of commuting to get to and from work. How does the seemingly ubiquitous masked hero do it?

He is reluctant to admit it, but explains that there are actually several SuperBarrios who lead the community groups into bureaucratic battle.

One of the men, Marco Rascón, is a self-styled ideologue of SuperBarrio's social campaigns. Through his regular column in the independent daily La Jornada newspaper, Rascón presents SuperBarrio's point of view on current



affairs, commenting on conflicts in small towns, describing how local groups have organized self-help actions, and publicizing popular causes. Rascón appears in public sometimes as the masked SuperBarrio, a heavy-set version of the free-style wrestler, and on other occasions dressed as an ordinary citizen of the disheveled variety.

Fighting evictions has become a hallmark of the defense committees that belong to the Asamblea de Barrios, and SuperBarrio is often on the scene to help residents as they confront landlords trying to throw tenants out on the street.

In Colonia Guerrero, a lower-class centre-city neighbourhood, residents live in crowded and de-

teriorating "vecindades", or one-room apartments, clustered around a central patio located in the centre of a city block. Often they share common toilets or laundry sinks. In some cases, residents have made the best of these crowded conditions, and help each other tend to their children and have formed strong neighbourhood organizations.

For example, Teresa Martinez and her neighbours have organized an elaborate system for blocking evictions. The so-called "Alert Commission" swings into action when a landlord gets near a household that has been threatened with eviction.

Neighbours phone in to a network that immediately begins advising nearby residents that an eviction is imminent. The threatened family, or their neighbours, shoot off loud firecrackers that let everyone in the area know an eviction is under way. Neighbours flock to the endangered household and crowd around to protect the family and discourage the landlord. In one year, in Colonia Guerrero alone, this type of community action has prevented more than 50 evictions.

"Nowadays, people don't accept eviction. If you go out to look, you aren't going to find housing — especially if you earn the minimum wage", SuperBarrio said in an interview in his home in Colonia Buena Vista, a working class neighbourhood near Colonia Guerrero.

Aside from these constant emergency operations, SuperBarrio can point to long-term projects he is involved with. By working together, the Asamblea de Barrios groups and SuperBarrio have obtained credits from the city's housing agency, FONHAPO (Fondo para Habitación Popular), for housing projects that will house more than 1,500 families.

It is not hard to find SuperBarrio's modest apartment, even though he lives in a crowded neighbourhood. On the tree-lined street where his vecindad is located, there is a colourful mural in the best Mexican tradition of painting. It shows SuperBarrio standing on a city street surrounded by banners demanding "End to Evictions!" and "Housing for the People!" SuperBarrio is cordial, personable and has a sense of humour. But his face is an enigma: he even refused to remove his mask when US immigration officials detained him in Los Angeles to check his visa. Not a chance that he would remove the mask for a foreign reporter.

But for SuperBarrio, housing is only one skirmish in the war that must be waged to improve the standard of living for the poor majority among the city's 18 million residents. "My role is to promote popular organization, and organization that is not only for satisfying personal needs like housing", he says.

In the broadest sense, SuperBarrio's work of encouraging community organization helps advance the cause of democracy in Mexico where, traditionally, citizen participation in civic life has been severely limited. A new culture of participation and self-help arose in Mexico City after the earthquake when the homeless set up groups to fight for government aid. "The participation of people in solving problems is an aspect of democracy", says SuperBarrio.

Shortly after his first appearance in 1987, SuperBarrio gained national prominence in Mexico when he became a leading spokesman for popular organization to prevent vote fraud in national elections held in July 1988.

With inflation and unemployment growing as Mexico's economic crisis persists, SuperBarrio is now staging a campaign to protest the government's austerity plan that has slashed real wages by 50 per cent and shriveled social programmes.

Recently, SuperBarrio mobilized demonstrations against the governments' anti-inflation pacts which, with the support of union bosses, captains of the industry and government officials, have held down wages and slowed price increases.

"For us SuperBarrio is a social wrestler — he comes to take up our causes."

Last August, backed by the Asamblea de Barrios, popular food supply councils and other city civic groups, SuperBarrio launched a "Pact against Hunger". The 11-point pact calls for reversing current government policies and implementing wage hikes, price freezes, increases in farm guarantee prices and higher taxes on the extremely rich.

In his "BarrioMovil", a 1950 panel truck, SuperBarrio inched along the capital's chic Paseo de la Reforma boulevard leading 25 civic organizations in a "March of Popular Envy of Extreme Wealth". Banging empty pots and pans and carrying banners that said "Lower Food Prices", the protesters symbolically closed the Mexico Stock Exchange and the offices of foreign banks and embassies to protest against the increasingly inequitable distribution of income in Mexico.

Lately, some workers in Mexico's labour movement have been talking of a "SuperWorker". So don't be surprised if next spring, instead of traditional poinsettias, Mexico will be sprouting red and yellow SuperBarrios all over the countryside.

Lucy Conger is a US freelance journalist living in Mexico.

Reprinted from Development Forum,
November-December, 1991

URBAN PLANNING



Our cities are growing ever outwards, swallowing up valuable farmland and creating car dominated wastelands. Now, city planners believe there is virtue in growing upwards not outwards.

The term, urban sprawl, has been around more than 30 years. Webster's Dictionary defines it as "the spreading of urban developments (houses and shopping centres) on undeveloped land near a city." It sounds innocent enough — simply the growth of neighbourhoods where people live and shop (they go to the city to work). But if your community has been caught up in urban sprawl, it means much more.

Writer Todd Oppenheimer puts it this way: "Sprawl can weaken or destroy the vitality of downtowns, limit the supply of inexpensive houses, paralyze the roads with cars, eat away at safe drinking water supplies and scar much of the landscape with asphalt, plastic signs, and sterile cookie-cutter buildings." He says that, because urban sprawl makes people dependent on their cars, it makes busing, cycling, and walking almost impossible.

That dependence on cars creates problems even beyond the daily frustrations of fighting traffic on congested roads. Cars are major contributors to air pollution, and they also demand enormous amounts of land and energy. According to one estimator,

every kilometre of road, along with its various junctions, ramps, and shoulders, can gobble up 10 hectares of land. And research shows that suburbanites use five times more energy getting to work than city-dwellers do.

As cities take over more and more of the countryside, they level trees, drain wetlands, and divert streams, replacing wildlife habitats and agricultural lands with concrete and asphalt. When people lose these lands, they become dependent on more distant food sources, and that means food that is less fresh and more costly.

In North America, people have been abandoning cities and moving to the suburbs at great rates — especially through the 1970s and 1980s. Today nearly half of all Americans live in the suburbs.

Urban sprawl was born in Los Angeles, the second largest city in the United States. Its population of nearly 15 million occupies an amazing 87,000 km² of land. Even its suburbs have suburbs. Everyday, millions of car drivers pull away from single-family houses perched on big lots and travel long distances to work. This greater metropolitan city is a tangled network of freeways jammed with cars (traffic crawls along at 30 km/h during "rush hour"). Alarming, it is the place most other American cities want to be like.

By comparison, Los Angeles may make Canada's biggest centre, Greater Toronto, seem compact. But, if you consider a more reasonable city — Paris, France — then you'll agree that Greater Toronto suffers from urban sprawl. The French capital has a population about the same as Toronto's (roughly two million), but Paris sits on just one-sixth the amount of land.

Urban sprawl and its related traffic congestion are major problems now facing city planners across the continent. But they didn't arise over-night.

Throughout history, the distance between work and home has been determined by how far people could travel in less than an hour. Transportation has always been the key to defining that distance. Of course, people who biked could go further in an hour than those who walked.

Then came the streetcar and the car. Their arrival meant that people could live even farther from their jobs. Supplies of cheap fuel made that daily travel possible. And most people were initially unaware that traffic and urban growth could harm the environment.

Further, a car culture developed — a love affair with the automobile that took its use well beyond its need. Los Angeles, for instance, operates America's second largest fleet of buses, but residents use it for only three per cent of their trips.

All this independent transportation supported a vicious circle. As cities aged, their decay encouraged people to head to the newer, greener suburbs. In turn, abandoning the inner city caused more decay — and more residents left. In less than 40 years, Detroit, Michigan lost 50% of its population to the suburbs. Even New York, the biggest city in the United States, is at risk of dying. Those who can afford to leave are going.

American economist Anthony Downs suggests that, ironically, people are creating nightmares out of dreams — destroying cities with their ideals. By striving to own a car and a single-family home in a suburb, North Americans are creating costly housing, sprawling cities, and traffic congestion. "...It is their success at attaining cherished goals that is creating the conditions they hate," he said.

Toronto architect Eberhard Zeidler points out that city planners have made some serious mistakes. They tried to make cities better by separating people's work from their home life and from entertainment areas. "We did not realize that... one activity lives on the other, that the pure 'office city' would be dead after 5 pm," he says.

Zeidler also notes that planners failed to see that expressways would disrupt cities. And they decided that density was a bad thing instead of realizing that it is an important part of city living and the key to affordable public transportation.

Further, many city planners avoided mixing business space with residences. Instead, they emphasized expensive neighbourhoods with single-family homes. The high costs and lack of housing have driven many people from the cities.

Sometimes planners have made urban sprawl even worse by trying to solve problems with more space. Their answer to more traffic was more roads, wider roads, and bigger parking lots. Their method of improving snow clearing was wider boulevards.

John Livey, a planner for Metro Toronto comments, "The old idea was that a city that works efficiently and economically ... was assumed to be the city that works." The city we want now, he says, is one that works well for everyone, environmentally and socially as well as economically.

But, how do we find what works?

Today, many city planners are looking for new approaches to the problems. And, they are striving to change conditions to fit the soul of the city — not the reverse.

For instance, planners are challenging old notions about city zoning. They are changing regulations to allow developers to build more two- and three-family homes and more buildings that contain both commercial and living space. They are allowing more owners of single-family homes to create small apartments within their houses. Zoning changes like these not only increase the number of housing units, they make housing more affordable.

DATA BANK

Percentage of Canadians who live in the country's nine biggest cities: 47

Percentage of Canada's population growth that occurred between 1981 and 1986 in the cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver: 65

Total revenue for Canada's cities, towns, and villages in 1990:
\$57.6 billion

Total expenses: \$59.6 billion

Number of people per km² in Toronto's central core: 6,553
in Toronto's suburbs: 2,697

Number of cars travelling in and out of Toronto each day
in 1971: 350,000
in 1988: 950,000

Percentage increase in Scarborough, ON, in the first 10 months of 1991
of crimes involving a weapon: +40
of break-ins: +33
robberies: +41
sexual assaults: +28
murders: +100

Number of murders per 100,000
in Cape Town, South Africa: 64.7
in Toronto: 4.1
in Madrid: 0.6

Planners are also looking at alternative housing schemes. Co-housing, for one, has been used in Denmark successfully since 1972. It involves a series of homes built around a central building that contains a common dining room, playroom, workshop, and laundry. Co-housing gives residents a sense of community while guarding their privacy. It provides housing that is both practical and inexpensive.

Residents in a cooperative housing development in California share day care facilities, parklands, and gardens in which they raise much of their own food. They also provide most of their heat and hot water using solar energy. The development began in 1973 to provide housing that would save energy, create a sense of community, and maintain the ecological balance of the area.

While some planners are still concerned about increasing the density of neighbourhoods, researchers in Austria and other countries point to some of the many advantages: more supportive social environment, better use of energy and utilities, greater support for public transportation (which makes it cheaper), and safer streets. Certainly in Montreal, where most people live in high-density housing, surveys find that the residents feel safe in their neighbourhoods and have a strong sense of belonging.

Planners also recognize the need to improve transportation options. They are looking at improving bus service by creating exclusive bus lanes on main roads, requiring traffic to yield to buses moving in and out of stops, and providing bus drivers with remote control over traffic signal lights.

A professor at the University of British Columbia, V. Setty Pendakur, suggests ways to encourage more biking. He says city planners should reduce the amount of land available to cars and make drivers pay the full costs of road-building, parking lots, and traffic control. Then, he thinks, more people would choose biking over driving.

Planners are also looking at ways to "green-up" cities. Schemes range from encouraging roof gardens (some German cities require them on new buildings) to preserving agricultural land near cities and encouraging farmers' markets in downtown neighbourhoods.

Toronto became one of the first cities in North America to rethink city planning. In 1976, it introduced more housing to the inner-city and tried to ease traffic congestion. By banning the building of new expressways and supporting public transportation, Toronto managed to reduce travel by 25,000 trips at peak times by 1989. But, urban sprawl continued throughout the 1980s.

Last year, the City of Toronto introduced its Cityplan '91, which calls for still more housing in the central city. It introduces rezoning that allows some of the main streets to grow

upwards. Many low-level commercial and mixed commercial-residential buildings will be expanded to four or five storeys. The move will provide inexpensive space for new-comers — not through urban sprawl — through more efficient use of land already served by sewers, pipelines, roads, and schools.

In a similar move, the much larger metropolitan Toronto plans to increase the number of four- to six-storey buildings along its main streets over the next 20 years. Planners aim to increase housing and improve the look of the streets.

Higher density zoning means that residents will have more opportunities to live close to their work. And, planners will see that these neighbourhoods are well served with parks, libraries, day cares, and other important facilities. City of Toronto regulations will ensure that new buildings fit in with the neighbourhood, allow plenty of sunlight to reach sidewalks and avoid creating winds.

"Cityplan is not only a plan for Toronto's future, but for the future of all our cities," says Robert Millward, the City of Toronto's commissioner of planning and development. "In ten years, urban areas will be different than they are now. They will have to change, or risk self-destructing."

After all, many cities in Europe have managed to change. They felt the beginnings of sprawl about 50 years ago and began planning to control it. Europeans live more closely together and use public transit more than North Americans do. Their downtowns tend to be clean, lively, and safe. And, they have taken steps to preserve the quality of their city centres.

London, England, for instance, surrounded itself with a greenbelt and set up new towns along a ring about 80 kilometres away. These towns are self-contained places for working and living. Linked by expressways and high-speed trains, they have attracted both population and job growth.

In a somewhat similar plan, Stockholm, Sweden developed towns as a series of satellites linked to the city by a new transit system. Paris, France also planned new, independent towns along its edge.

Several European cities have also taken steps to discourage the high volume traffic caused by urban sprawl. Oslo, Norway, for example, charges motorists fees to drive within the city centre. Athens, Greece completely bans driving on certain days.

And planners can take heart from the efforts to control traffic in Portland, Oregon. By 1972, urban sprawl had created an abandoned, polluted centre — a city in crisis. Then, Portland began a mammoth effort to revive itself by bringing people back to the city — day and night. It called off the construction of one of its main expressways and built a waterfront park instead. It ripped out a garage that sat on valuable land and put in a public square. It opened an efficient new rail line. It developed a fleet of 500 buses and a network of bus shelters equipped with phones and TV displays of transit schedules.

The results? Downtown traffic that is half what you'd expect for a city the size of Portland, less pollution and \$400 million in new development along the transit lines. It seems that success in saving our cities depends a lot on changing our ideas about how we live and work. And, it seems that it would be wise to change those ideas sooner rather than later.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. In Shanghai, a city of more than 12 million, people make 43% of their trips by bike. How might the people of your city be encouraged to make more trips by bike?
2. Watch one lane of traffic at a central corner in your community for 10 minutes. What percentage of all the cars that pass contain only one person? How might people be encouraged to use car pools or public transit more often?
3. Consider the adults in your household. How far do they have to go to get to work? to shop? to see a movie? What transportation problems, if any, do they have?

DIANE SWANSON

Reprinted with permission from Canada and the World magazine, Oakville, Ontario from the March 1992 issue.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

Seoul: a case study

Among Korea's cities, Seoul, the nation's capital, has endured the most serious environmental problems. The city's population has experienced tremendous growth, reaching 10,286,000 in 1988 and, according to the statistics, heading for 12,000,000 in 2001. This has provoked disorderly urban sprawl, traffic congestion, pollution, outmoded urban infrastructure and overcrowding. Some 53 percent of all Seoulites say they have experienced housing difficulties.

Architecture and Environmental Planning specialist, Prof. Kwi-Gon Kim of Seoul National University says efforts to improve the situation have "failed because planning and management procedures ignored important environmental factors resulting from ecological restraints."

The Seoul-Korean National MAB (Man and the Biosphere Programme) Committee for Unesco led by Prof. Kim, in 1983 launched a series of "Ecological Studies of Seoul Urban Systems" to examine the problems and come up with solutions. The aim was to come up with a global framework for planning and management that took account of the city as a complete, interdependent unit. A programme of studies was drawn up which targeted five main areas of research: ecosystem analysis, risk assessment and indicators, green space, social aspects and perception, land use patterns and management.

"First up, I observed the environmental impact assessment of a new town development project with a case study of Kwachon New Town, from 1983 to 1986," Kim explains. The object of this study was to examine the flow and conservation of energy in Kwachon, a southern satellite city of Seoul. Urban energy consumption is a major financial

burden for national governments, but few standard design methods for integrating energy considerations into urban planning yet exist. Prof. Kim's recommendations for the more efficient use of energy in Kwachon included: the planning of attractive cycleways and footpaths to reduce dependence on motorized transport, higher housing densities in the city centre and the southward

level of discomfort, significantly reduces air pollution and lowers urban temperatures. "Efficient, effective management of urban vegetation is essential to the environmental and social well-being of all," Kim concludes. This study also touched on another controversial environmental issue in Seoul concerning designated green areas. As a measure of effective land utility, the Seoul City government designated "Green Belt" areas from the 1970s, which cover approximately 1,543.18 km² within the metropolitan region.

"So curved streets are better. We sure botched that one here in the West."

Graphic: The Africa File, VIDEA



orientation of houses to increase insulation (by up to 30 percent), and the introduction of a joint power/district heating system. He also found that curvilinear streets are less energy consuming than the rectilinear grids favoured by many urban planners; less street is required, utility lines are shorter and travelling distances are reduced. Safety is another major consideration in city planning, and to this end Kim began to work on risk perception in 1987, to try to understand how people in Seoul think about such risks as flooding, chemical pollution or nuclear reactors, and how they respond to it. The professor believes that understanding the position of residents on these questions will help improve the quality of city planning and policy-making. Guidelines for assessing risk from environmental pollution in urban areas were also developed.

Green space and well being

The project was further advanced in 1988 to research the relationship between urban climate and green space. Results here showed that green space decreases peoples'

Many people support the idea, but some say the green belts limit growth. Despite the controversy, no formal, full-scale review of the problem had been carried out and every year, violations within these areas — mainly due to changing land use — increase. Thus, a sixth research area of the Unesco Seoul MAB series has been extended to the study of these land use changes from 1971 to 1989. The Professor says the study will lay a foundation for future ecological investigation within and beyond the green belt. He also pointed out that the completed information will be used to develop a land use information system as well as to correct the misuse or unbalanced use of land under the present regulations. Kim stressed that the purpose of all these studies is not only to discover and understand present problems but also to suggest an integrated planning report for future development. After all, before authorities draw up plans that will affect the lives of millions, they must know what they're dealing with.

Yoon Kyoung-hee/Seoul

Reprinted from UNESCO Sources, July/August 1990

Rediscovering the Village

Small-town comforts are now the cutting edge of urban planning

Today on my walk home from work I dropped in at Dave's Dinkytown Hairstylists for a haircut. Dave's 8-year-old son, his 15-year-old daughter, and her boyfriend were hanging out in the shop after school. While Mona was snipping away at my hair, Fred, a Dinkytown institution, came in for his monthly trim. He told us all about his new great-grandson while Dave trimmed his hair ("short on the top, just trim the sides ..."). Afterward I popped into Biermaier's Books to see if Bill had a used paperback of *Main Street* (he did) and stopped in at Ralph & Jerry's Grocery to pick up a half-gallon of 2% and to flirt with the new checkout woman (she has a boyfriend).

To me, this relaxing, 20-minute stroll home from work seems only natural — and far more convenient than battling traffic on the freeway. But to those who are thinking about the future of our cities, my 20-minute walk is along the cutting edge of contemporary urban planning, and the Dinkytown/Holmes neighborhood of Minneapolis, where I live, work, eat, shop, and play, is the very definition of an "urban village." It is the village, that most ancient of human settlements, that is stirring people's imaginations today, reinforcing the Swiss architect Luigi Snozzi's belief that "nothing needs to be invented; everything needs to be rediscovered."

The qualities that are being rediscovered in the village are simple: A village is a compact gathering of houses, apartment buildings, corner groceries, Main Street shops and offices. A village is inhabited by people of diverse age groups and income levels. And a village is friendly to pedestrians, a place where you can easily walk to work or to the grocery rather than driving a money-hungry, resource-hogging, smog-pumping automobile.

The qualities of the village can be encapsulated in a simple model for urban planning: the city as a collection of villages. In recent decades, this idea has been discarded, and replaced with the modernist model of the city as machine. While the village blends houses with shops, the old with the young, and the rich with the poor, the notion of the city as machine, which is now rigidly enforced in the United States through impenetrable layers of zoning codes, relentlessly and singlemindedly separates the old from the young, the rich from the poor, apartments from town houses, houses from shops, and factories from offices, until the city is so sprawled out that such simple, everyday tasks as getting a hair-cut, browsing for a novel, and picking up a half-gallon of milk require three separate automobile trips.

According to city-as-machine thinking, all these separate activities would be easily accessible by high-speed freeways, and every citizen would be mobile and independent in his or her private

automobile. The machine model of cities promised efficiency, convenience, and the tidy clarity of everything having its own place. Unfortunately, it didn't work — as our downtowns, which are generally lifeless after five o'clock, and modern suburbia, which has become a classic case of there being no there there, can attest.

The simple city-as-village idea may have the power to reshape our soulless cities and suburbs over the coming decades, for this model has gained adherents all across the ideological spectrum, from the '60s activist roots of California planner Peter Calthorpe to the Ivy League style of Miami architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk; from the Marxist urban theorist Leon Krier to the future King of England, Prince Charles (who hired Krier to design his new show-case village of Poundbury in Dorset); from the golf-cart retirement villages of the Sunbelt to the Birkenstock-style Village Homes development in Davis, California.

Clearly the city as village functions more smoothly as urban design than the city as machine — this is becoming increasingly evident as problems with pollution, traffic, and affordable housing mount. But the strongest appeal of the village model is its tug on human emotions: The village promises a life that is simpler, slower, and safer; a life where a neighborhood is transformed through

Clearly the city as village functions more smoothly as urban design than the city as machine — this is becoming increasingly evident as problems with pollution, traffic, and affordable housing mount.

social ties into a community; a life more intimately tied to the cycles of nature; a life that seems somehow more honest and genuine.

At its best this emotional tug provides a genuine historical continuity that taps into the spirit of such beloved communities as Aspen, Carmel, Taos, and Bayfield, Wisconsin-tourist villages that are now being loved to death. At its worst this emotional tug is the mindless nostalgia that Christopher Lasch denounces as "the abdication of memory," a nostalgia that many developers are now exploiting with white picket fences and front porch railings lifted from traditional neighborhoods and deposited in otherwise ordinary sprawling suburban developments.

Reshaping the world, of course, is not a simple task. Any attempt to create a new village, or even to build a simple corner store in an existing residential neighborhood, faces a major battle, for the principles of the modernist city-as-machine model are deeply entrenched in the zoning codes of every city, municipality, and county in the nation.

Yet even within this legal superstructure of zoning codes the marketplace is rediscovering the village in unexpected ways: A new SuperAmerica outlet in Burnsville, a suburb that grew up around a freeway exit 15 miles south of my home in inner-city Minneapolis, functions as a grocery store (milk, nachos, sandwich meat), a bakery (bread, cookies, muffins), a service station (gasoline, wiper blades, oil), a bank (automatic teller machines), a hardware store (light bulbs, screwdrivers, snow shovels), a video store

(Julia Roberts, Sylvester Stallone, and Woody Allen), a news-stand (newspapers, magazines, paperback novels), a café (sit-down dining on microwave foods), a post office (stamps, a fax machine, a Federal Express drop box) ... all the commercial institutions of a village Main Street have been compressed into one small convenience store. It's not hard to imagine people bumping into each other here and trading stories about the weather, the traffic, the high school hockey team or maybe even the birth of a great-grandson.



Graphic: The Africa File, VIDEA

"In a village relationships are important, not money and power. Sounds good to me."

The village was supposed to be dead and buried alongside the covered wagon in our nostalgic memory, but it turned out to be both too practical and too deeply embedded in our imaginations to

die.

A village, of course, is far more than a simple physical structure. It is a community of diverse individuals and families. Sinclair Lewis skewered the smug, parochial, small-town way of life in his 1920 master-piece, *Main Street*. Can we revive the village forms without also reviving the social and moral codes that allowed small-town life to function smoothly? Can we re-create village forms and community without the social structures Lewis satirized? Perhaps Lewis' own life provides us with an answer. When he fled the stifling provincialism of Sauk Centre, Minnesota, for the sophistication of New York in 1907, he found a home in the bohemian enclave of Greenwich Village, a community perhaps as provincial and literally villagelike as the society he left behind - just one with a different set of values.

Journalist James Fallows argues in his book *More Like Us* that it is America's rejection of Old World village life — where society is static, time is cyclical, and the rhythms of life flow from the natural cycles of birth, death, and rebirth — that has made America a world economic power. The American dream is built on values alien to the village, on our willingness to tolerate unpredictable disorder, to follow the job market like nomads, and to reinvent our lives with every generation. This economic prowess has come at a cost measured in escalating levels of traffic, environmental damage, rushing around, rootlessness, and alienation — a cost many people are no longer willing to pay.

On the larger scale, questions about what kind of society we really want are daunting. On the smaller scale, the scale of everyday life, they are simple. If I had driven to a trendy hair salon rather than stopping in at Dave's Dinkytown Hairstylists, I never would have shared Fred's joy at the birth of his great-grandson. And Fred's joy made my life just a little bit richer.

Robert Gerloff is an associate with Mulfinger, Susanka & Mahady Architects in Minneapolis.

Reprinted from the Utne Reader, May/June 1992

How to make cities more humane

Success stories from Portland, Pittsburgh, and Europe

Modern cities can often seem like harsh places for people. To walk along many urban streets is to brave noise, smog, and the danger of being struck by a motor vehicle. Poorly planned city landscapes offer few glimpses of nature and little relief from relentless concrete and asphalt. Although nearly every city has its lively districts filled with character and color, large expanses of most cities are devoid of urban charm. Many neighborhoods have no inviting places for friends to meet or children to play.

Making urban areas more humane — in other words, bringing the village back into the city — involves major changes in the use of public space. In cities all over the world, automobile traffic needs to be restrained. Many European cities, especially in Germany and the Netherlands, have redesigned roads in order to "calm" traffic. This usually entails lowering speed limits and introducing strategically placed speed bumps, trees, bushes, flower beds, or play areas along or in the roadway — gentle inducements that make drivers proceed slowly and yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, cyclists, and children at play.

Often, the heart of a downtown is inappropriate for motor vehicles. Most of Western Europe's major cities have now reserved their centers for people on foot. Prague also has a large auto-free section, and Moscow's Arbat Street, reborn in 1989 as a pedestrian zone, is now the most lively district in the city. The bazaars of Northern Africa are also pedestrian territory, as are the market places of Asia and Latin America.

Greenery further softens the city's rough edges. Devoting more urban space to trees and other plants can provide habitat for a surprising diversity of birds and other wildlife, giving city dwellers a needed bond with nature. Great Britain's Nature Conservancy Council, a central government agency, now supports nature reserve projects in more than 60 urban areas.

Many cities are linking stretches of open space along rivers, canals, or old rail lines into paths for cycling, horseback riding, jogging, and walking. For urbanites, these "greenways" bring fresh air and nature closer to home. In the United States, where greenways in Washington, D.C., Seattle, and other cities have become major routes for bicycle commuters, an estimated 500 new greenway projects (led largely by citizens' groups) are currently in process.

Better planning and more compact urban design can create city spaces that are friendly and safe enough for people to gather and enjoy themselves. Studies of street life in cities around the world show that certain common elements are needed to make streets and public spaces more humane. Among them are abundant trees and bushes, car-free spaces for people to walk or sit together with others, and streets lined with ground-level retail shops that serve the public.

In many cities, popular misconceptions about high-density development inhibit adop-

tion of these practical land use patterns. Planners and citizens, particularly in North America, often assume that moderate and high-density land use are synonymous with crime and unhealthy conditions. Yet there is no scientific evidence of a link between these social problems and density per se. A recent report on the world's 100 largest cities, for example, found that Hong Kong — the most densely populated city, with 403 people per hectare — has fewer murders per capita than all but 11 of the other 99 cities. And low-density American cities like Los Angeles, Houston, and Miami are among those with the highest murder rates.

In her 1961 classic, *The Death and Life of Great Ameri-*

////////////////////////////////////
Devoting more urban spaces to trees and other plants can provide habitat for a surprising diversity of birds and other wildlife, giving city dwellers a needed bond with nature.
////////////////////////////////////

can Cities, author Jane Jacobs advanced the notion that by providing "eyes on the street," densely populated, people-filled areas become less vulnerable to crime. She reasoned, "The safety of the street works best, most casually, and with least frequent taint of hostility or suspicion precisely where people are using and enjoying the city streets voluntarily."

Similarly, high and moderate urban densities in themselves do not create a harsh physical environment. Copenhagen and Vienna — two cities widely associated with urban charm and livability — each have a relatively high

density. By contrast, low-density cities such as Phoenix often are dominated by unwelcoming, car-oriented commercial strips and vast expanses of concrete and asphalt.

Compact development also fosters more livable cities by making walking, biking, and public transportation attractive alternatives to always using an auto to get around. It is not too late for well-established cities to improve their land use patterns by filling in underused space with new development. Even in cities where most areas are overcrowded, a surprising amount of land in other parts is vacant or underused. For example, only about half of the urbanized land in Bogota, Colombia, is actually developed, suggesting that it could be used much more effectively for homes, commercial developments, and parks.

Cities can help spark the regeneration of their underused and blighted land through property taxes, levying a higher charge on land than on buildings. This dual approach is now in effect in 15 U.S. cities — mostly in Pennsylvania, which has specific "enabling" legislation that allows localities to make such a change. When Pittsburgh introduced a sharply graded dual tax system in 1978, the number of vacant lot sales, new building permits, and new dwellings quickly increased. At the same time, demolitions declined.

Another priority for increasing density in residential areas is to allow homeowners to rent out small apartments within their homes. The size of the average household in industrial countries is shrinking steadily as couples have fewer children and more people choose living arrangements other than the nuclear family. As a result, many homes built for large households can accommodate an extra unit in a converted basement, garage, or attic — or even an added story. According to a 1985 estimate, 12 million to 18 million homes in the United States have surplus space that may be suitable for accessory apartments. Local governments in Canada and Europe encourage this as a way to provide needed housing and make better use of space. Most U.S. communities, by contrast, prohibit apartments in houses in single-family zones. In recent years, however, housing-short communities in California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts have changed their regulations to promote them.

Fortunately for the world's polluted, traffic-clogged cities, there are some outstanding models of urban planning that boost compact development, public transit ridership, pedestrians, and overall quality of life. Instead of giving in to ever greater automobile dependence and sprawl, Portland, Oregon, has encircled itself with an urban growth boundary beyond which new development is not allowed.

In roughly two decades, Portland has successfully fended off sprawl and reclaimed valuable city space from the automobile. The city has increased its housing density by encouraging a blend of multi- and single-family homes in pleasant, compact patterns. Portland's vibrant downtown boasts such green spaces as a waterfront park, which was once an expressway, and Pioneer Courthouse Square, formerly a parking lot. City officials welcome new office construction but restrict the amount of accompanying parking. Since the early '70s, the volume of cars entering the downtown has remained the same, even though the number of downtown jobs has increased by 5 percent.



Photo: Canadian Social Trends, Summer 1991

Investments in public transport have also paid off in Portland. A highly popular transit mall reserves an 11-block stretch of two avenues in the commercial district for buses. Today, 43 percent of all Portland's downtown commuters ride buses and a light rail system, a higher ridership rate than those of most other U.S. cities its size. The shift to public transportation is believed to be partly responsible for dramatic air-quality improvements in Portland; the number of air-quality violations went down from one every three days in the early '70s to zero in 1989.

Excerpted from *World Watch* (Jan./Feb. 1992)

People power transforms a St. Louis Housing project

Bertha Gilkey lives today in Cochran Gardens, a St. Louis public housing project featuring flower-lined paths, trees and grass, play equipment for children, a beautiful and clean neighborhood, happy and trusting people. Gilkey grew up in the very same housing project when it was an ugly urban scar filled with broken windows, graffiti, rubbish, frequent shootings (both kinds), angry and fearful people. The change is one of the most dramatic stories dealing with government housing in our lifetime. And there might well have been no change at all except for Bertha Gilkey — and her hard, astute community organizing.

As a teenager she attended tenant meetings at a nearby church, and when she was 20 years old, Bertha was elected by the Cochran residents to chair their tenants' association. Since that time, the project has not been the same. Bertha had both short-range and long-range strategies, but she told me that she dared not tell anybody the long-range strategy. Nobody would have believed her.

Bertha and her group started with small things. What did people really want? What could actually be done? Everyone wanted a laundromat again. All of the project's previous ones had been vandalized. Bertha and her group began to organize other residents. "Let's get our laundromat locked," they said. "Locked?" Gilkey recalls, "When we took over, there were no locks. There was no doors! All the doors had been taken down." They got a new door from the city housing authority. Then the tenants had a fundraiser for a lock. Then for paint. The laundromat was a success. Next, the group organized to paint the hallways, floor by floor. "Everybody who lived on a floor was responsible

for painting that floor," says Gilkey. "If you didn't paint that floor, it didn't happen. Kids who lived on a floor that hadn't been painted would come and look at the painted hallways and then go back and hassle their parents. The elderly who couldn't paint prepared lunch, so they could feel like they were a part of it, too."

While sprucing up the physical appearance of their building, Bertha and her organized tenants reintroduced a kind of conduct code for their unit. A committee established rules of behavior and elected monitors on each floor: No fights, no garbage out the windows, no loud disruptions, etc. Slowly people got the message. People got involved. Living conditions improved, bit by bit.

They renamed their unit the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Building. Symbols were important. "Everything we did, we had a party and a celebration," Gilkey says. "There would be a dedication for everything." Even the new laundromat had a ribbon-cutting.

"When we got Cochran Plaza built, they said it was too beautiful for people from Cochran and started moving other people in."

Reaching the young people was another of Gilkey's key strategies. Changes were initiated in schools. "Kids wrote papers on 'What I Like about Living Here,' playing up the positive Gilkey explains. "In the art class, they built a cardboard model of the housing project with street

and playground. The principal put it in a glass dome with a sign that read 'Cochran.' Then kids could say, 'I live in that building.' Gradually, in an indirect way, we were rebuilding self-esteem, telling the kids it's all right to live in public housing."

Today Cochran Gardens high-rises are completely renovated. There is a community center, courtyards, tennis courts, playgrounds, and the Cochran Plaza town houses, built to reduce density in the complex. "But we had to fight the Housing Authority on that," Gilkey recalls. "When we got Cochran Plaza built, they said it was too beautiful for people from Cochran and started moving other people in. So we took them to court. The judge wrote a whole decision about how incompetent the Authority was. It was beautiful."

Cochran Gardens is one of four public housing projects in St. Louis managed by tenants. It is the centerpiece of an extensive network of non-profit housing developments and businesses owned and operated by the Tenant Management Council. Its other ventures include a catering service, health clinics, daycare centers, and a vocational training program. After showing me through Cochran Gardens, Bertha Gilkey asked rhetorically, "Isn't this beautiful? Isn't this the way poor people are supposed to live?"

How did all this happen? A lot of work, a lot of dedication, a lot of years. A lot of organizing. Gilkey sums it up: "Either you plan or they plan for you."

As I finished my visit to Cochran Gardens, Gilkey turned to me and said, smiling, "This goes against the grain, doesn't it? Poor people are to be managed. What we've done is cut through all the bullshit and said it doesn't take all that. People with degrees and credentials got us in this mess. All it takes is some basic skills."

I asked her about the principles that have created a success at Cochran: self-help, dignity, empowerment, responsibility. Are these transferable to any community? "Yes, yes," she smiled. "If we can do it in public housing, it can happen anywhere."

-Harry C. Boyte/Occasional Papers

Reprinted from the Occasional Papers, January 1989

THE CULTIVATED CITY

Kitchen gardens in Buenos Aires

"Urban kitchen gardening may be a sheer necessity for the poor, which makes it a dead-end activity. On the other hand it may also be a way to freedom, helping to open up channels of communication and action, conducive to self-management and initiative, a potential that is lacking in traditional income redistribution systems".

This is how Pable Gutman, a researcher at the Centre of Urban and Regional Studies (CEUR) with its headquarters in Buenos Aires, concludes his review of one of the topics covered in his wide-ranging study of ways of improving food provision and energy use in urban areas.

Sponsored by the United Nations University and Unesco's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme, the research project by Gutman and his colleagues Graciela Gutman and Guillermo Dascal focuses on the problem of food provision for low-income town-dwellers, which is just one aspect of the serious crisis in Latin American cities — others being acknowledged as rapid and unbalanced growth, environmental problems, unemployment, housing shortages and malnutrition.

"Cheap" calories

It might be objected that as has sometimes been the case with imports of food for famine relief in Africa, the introduction of new sources of food supply would distort food markets to the detriment of rural farmers. However standard methods of stimulating food production rarely benefit the hard core urban poor, who remain outside the normal food market chain, which according to Gutman is certainly the case around the Argentine capital. "Although there may be a plentiful supply of food in Buenos Aires, and other Argentine cities," he says "the poor simply cannot afford to pay mar-

ket prices for the food available".

The study notes that urban kitchen gardens are uncommon in Latin American countries. Migrants from rural areas leave their farming skills behind and turn to new urban forms of employment. It has been estimated, however, that a kitchen garden of some 40 to 50 square metres can produce the equivalent of 25 to 50 per cent of a the food budget for a family of two adults and four children, with a diet consisting mainly of vegetables.

According to Gutman, "a kitchen garden that meets all a family's needs for green vegetables, legumes and root vegetables can produce a large proportion of the 'cheap' calories and proteins consumed by low-income groups in the urban community. The worse the original situation, the greater the potential contribution of a kitchen garden to a family's overall diet and budget".

One of the questions that the CEUR researchers sought to answer was whether urban kitchen gardening was a chore imposed by unemployment and low incomes or a creative way of spending one's leisure time. "We found from our co-operative work with community kitchen gardening programmes and from interviews with gardeners in working-class districts that they are not motivated solely by necessity. Individuals and families also have aesthetic needs and a desire to enjoy life and show solidarity through generosity as well as just eating and surviving". Hence the demand for flower seeds by local gardeners and hence also the neighbour

who at first cannot bear to pick a vegetable "because it looks so nice" and then gives it away to the woman next door.

Regulating urban growth

Gutman and his colleagues also studied agricultural development in greater Buenos Aires, a wide green belt that was for a long time the city's sole purveyor of agricultural produce. A number of factors have recently undermined its importance, but its supplier function has been enhanced in other ways: less energy consumed for transport and storage, a source of employment, the possibility of more productive interaction between natural and urban environments, and the

use of peripheral urban agriculture as a means of controlling and regulating urban growth.

Gutman does not think that urban kitchen gar-

"... a kitchen garden that meets all a family's needs ... can provide a large proportion of the 'cheap' calories consumed by low-income groups in the urban community."

dening should be the only strategy used to counter malnutrition. But he does feel that the idea has advantages over other income distribution programmes inasmuch as "it creates independence where the others create dependence, because it exploits unused urban resources, improves the quality of the family and neighbourhood surroundings, increases the amount of resources available and promotes interaction between town-dwellers and the natural environment by forging links that are becoming increasingly necessary and important".

Julio Orione, Buenos Aires

Reprinted from UNESCO Sources, July/August 1990

A Love Affair

that's really a forced marriage

BY ANNE HANSEN

AMERICAN architect Andres Duany observes that in most U.S. cities, "the single most important constitutional principle is that cars must be happy."

And so there must be vast parking lots. There must be wide "parkways" (where's the "park"?), and "expressways" to accommodate cars. Anything that doesn't move is paved over.

Pedestrians are herded onto narrow sidewalks, so cars can have maximum space. Cyclists are shunted aside into the car-door lane, or onto the sidewalk — much to the chagrin of pedestrians. Children are stopped from playing on their own streets because cars have domain over every public space. There are service stations for cars on practically every street corner, but few places — such as benches and public washrooms — for human beings.

Based in Miami and Washington, Mr. Duany and his wife and partner, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, operate America's hottest urban-planning firm. Their success was launched with Seaside, Fla., a pedestrian-oriented community planned a decade ago. Since then, they have been commissioned to design 40 more towns.

When Mr. Duany addressed Harvard University, he spoke of the "loving precision" with which we accommodate cars. He described urban-planning codes as being "extraordinarily precise about the needs of the car." But, he concludes, "the needs of the human are another matter."

Science broadcaster David Suzuki talks about how humans have lost their connection to the Earth: traffic engineers don't even know what trees are any more; they call them "fixed hazardous objects," or FHOs.

Cities are built for cars rather than people. Suburbia is held together by automobiles, not by human interac-

tion. The oned in single-fam-

It is seemingly impossible to participate fully in society without reliance on the private automobile. Almost every suburban activity is predicated on the automobile. The segregation and the low density of housing, commercial and retail centres relegate all non-motorists to disabled status.

Our so-called love affair with the car is really forced marriage. We don't drive cars. They are driving us. Crazy. Even the head of Volvo says cars have to be eliminated from cities.

The vehicularization of the street means that people on foot or bicycle feel as if they don't belong; Ottawalk, a pedestrian-rights organization in Ottawa, says that safety campaigns commonly emphasize the obligation of pedestrians to stay out of the way of cars — not the other way around. The most vulnerable road users are therefore expected to take the lion's share of responsibility for their own safety.

It's time that car drivers bore this responsibility. It is they who wield the greatest threat to society — with their speed, mass, noise and stink. The Toronto Traffic Calming Alliance reports that crossing the road is the greatest killer of U.S. schoolchildren, next to cancer.

A city isn't civilized if children can't safely walk or bike to school. Communities need to be redesigned, so people can cross the city easily by foot, bicycle and public transit.

The call for cities for people — not cars — will be voiced at the Second International Conference on Auto-Free Cities, being held in Toronto this weekend.

New Planning Ontario, a reform group chaired by former Toronto mayor John Sewell, is recommending a municipal "feet-first" policy. "Feet-first" means walking should be the No. 1 transportation priority in municipalities, followed by bicycles and public transit. The private car would be the mode of last choice. Where it belongs.

THERE are plenty of ways to liberate the streets for human beings. Many of these are recommended in the book *End of the Road: The World Car Crisis and How We Can Solve It*, by Wolfgang Zuckermann, and by groups like Ottawalk and Pollution Probe. Implement "traffic calming," as is done in numerous European cities. Modify streets to give all users adequate space. Enact parking policy that discourages, rather than accommodates, cars. Reward employees with transit passes instead of free parking.

Accommodate the bicycle. Acknowledge that walking and cycling must be segregated, because shared use compromises everybody's enjoyment. Provide street parking for bicycles now assigned to cars. Place public transit at the heart of transportation policy. Stop the massive government subsidies to car drivers (\$3-billion a year in Ontario, according to Pollution Probe). Impose a "user-pay" road toll and higher gas taxes.

Change zoning laws so people can live, shop and work within walkable distance. Recognize that walking is a right, and driving a privilege. Reduce speed limits. And finally, fire half the traffic engineers and replace them with community relations workers, pedestrians, cyclists, school children, the elderly, the disabled, sociologists and landscape ecologists.

Anne Hansen is a cyclist and freelance writer.

Reprinted from *Globe and Mail*, May 18, 1992

Calming Motorized Traffic

It takes active restrictions on automobiles to make some streets safe for slower traffic. Particularly on residential streets, making them slow down with speed limits and physical barriers can discourage drivers from "rat running" — racing down side streets to avoid congested intersections and delays on larger roads. Many European cities use these restrictions, known as "traffic calming," to turn streets into places for people who live, work, and shop there, instead of for drivers just passing through. While there is so far no evidence that traffic calming reduces overall automobile use, the scheme's chief contribution is to safely accommodate pedestrians and cyclists on city streets without shunting them onto separate (and often inferior) lanes or paths.

For more than two decades the Dutch have calmed traffic by changing the lay-out of the residential street, transforming it into a *woonerf*, or "living yard." In the *woonerf*, cars are forced to negotiate slowly around carefully placed trees and other landscaping. Since motor traffic cannot monopolize the entire breadth of the street, much of the space is made more open to walking, cycling, and children's play. Automobiles are free to enter the *woonerf*, but only as "guests", while non-motorized traffic has priority. Experience with traffic calming has shown that it is most effective if widely implemented, so that motor traffic problems are not simply diverted to nearby streets.

West Germany's similar *Verkehrsberuhigung* ("traffic calming") schemes have multiplied into the thousands throughout the country since they were started in the 70s. Originally intended for residential areas, *Verkehrsberuhigung* is now spreading over whole cities. Traffic calming greatly improves the quality of life in neighborhoods where it is implemented, and so is gathering popularity in many countries, including Sweden, Italy, Switzerland and Japan. Such restraints are so well-received in Denmark that local residents themselves are often willing to pay for the measures.

"The horseless carriage is a dangerous fad that will never last"

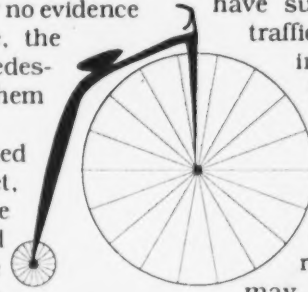
— a common observation in the early 1900s.

encouraging results. Tempo 30 zones showed significant reductions in accident rates and noise and exhaust levels, with no increase in speeds or accidents on nearby major roads. As with traffic calming, Tempo 30 has proven most effective where applied to entire zones rather than single streets, and where public transport is exempted and given right-of-way. Following the end of the experiment in 1989, demands for Tempo 30 arose from all over the country, and now there is talk of introducing it on 60 to 70 percent of city streets nation-wide.

Another way to give street space to people other than drivers is to restrict cars in city centres, where they are the least appropriate and most bothersome form of transport. Several Western European cities have successfully restrained traffic in the core by dividing it into cells. In

Goteborg, Sweden, for example, the city centre is divided into five pie-shaped zones, all accessible by a large ring road on the periphery. Automobiles may not cross the zone boundaries, but public transport, emergency vehicles, bicycles, and mopeds can. Goteborg's cell system was instituted in 1970 along with reserved lanes for buses and trams, and some streets closed to all but pedestrians. Since then, the city has had fewer accidents and better public transport service. Traffic cells are also found in Bremen, West Germany (where they originated); Besancon, France; the Dutch city of Groningen; and Tunis.

What would the future look like, if cities were not dominated by cars? The very heart of a city would be reserved for people on foot and passengers arriving by metro or trolley. Proceeding outward from the center, streets would become the shared domain of pedestrians, cyclists, trolleys, and buses. Slow automobile traffic would be allowed beyond the city's densest core, but frequent bus and rail services — running between stops placed



within walking or cycling distance of most points — would offer a faster mode of travel. Express public transport routes would link outlying areas to each other and to the downtown. Car parking would be progressively less restricted as one moved away from the city centre. People would make most short trips by foot or bicycle, and longer urban trips by walking or biking to transport stops, then continuing by bus, metro

or trolley. Many long drives and short airplane flights between cities would be replaced by train trips. Automobiles' main function would be to make trips for which these other modes are inconvenient, such as transporting loads of things or people, traveling at odd hours when public transport is running infrequently, and certain recreational uses.

Marcin Lowe is a senior researcher with the Worldwatch Institute in Washington, DC.

Reprinted from *Alternatives*, Vol. 18, No.1, 1991. Originally printed in *Alternatives to Automobiles: Transport for Livable Cities* (Washington, DC: Worldwatch Institute, 1991)

TWELVE DIMENSIONS OF ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY AT BAMBERTON*

Principles for a sustainable community

1. Bamberton will restore an ecologically scarred and damaged site, bring life back to the ruins, and establish a process of permanent stewardship to safeguard the land from future ecological harm.
2. Bamberton will seek to encourage the values needed for sustainability by inviting everyone, whether resident, builder or banker, to sign the Bamberton Code.
3. Bamberton is being consciously designed to preserve green space, farmland and forests, and to protect the region from urban sprawl and uncontrolled development pressures by accommodating a significant percentage of the population growth forecast for the southern Cowichan Valley area.
4. Bamberton will encourage the development of a friendly, supportive community — giving special encouragement to the arts, and to affordable housing, in order to nurture a healthy, balanced community of all ages, where people will be able to live a whole and balanced life.
5. Bamberton's site lay-out is being designed to encourage a strong sense of community, with narrower, pedestrian priority streets and neighbourhoods where people can go about their lives without having to depend on an automobile.
6. Bamberton will go out of its way to protect the soil, air, water, native species and biodiversity by numerous controls and initiatives and by the highest available quality sewage treatment, involving recycling and composting.
7. Bamberton's economy will enable people to work locally, minimizing commuting outside the area, and enabling the community to develop control over its own economic destiny. Bamberton's businesses will be encouraged to achieve ecological sustainability through education, encouragement, and the development of an environmental business code.
8. Bamberton will encourage a high level of research, innovation and development and the provision of sophisticated telecommunications facilities (such as fibre-optics) in order to assist the shift from a resource-based economy to an ecologically sound intelligence-based economy.
9. Bamberton will aim to achieve a very high level of domestic, commercial and construction waste reduction and recycling through education, legislation, community recycling, and a materials recovery plant.
10. Bamberton will encourage the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, air-pollution, and a lessening of our habitual dependency on the car by the design of its streets and neighbourhoods, by the existence of the local Bamberton economy (reducing the need for commuting), and by the availability of pleasant, friendly, public transit.
11. Bamberton is investigating the establishment of a Bamberton Institute, which would work to ensure the practical application of sustainable community ideals, both at Bamberton and around the world. Associated with the Institute, it is hoped to establish a Ecological Interpretation Centre, a demonstration garden, a sustainability indicators project and many other projects and initiatives.
12. Bamberton will share its experiences and resources and work with others to achieve ecological sustainability for the Cowichan region area, for Vancouver Island, and for the Earth as a whole.

Reprinted from Bamberton News, Spring 1992

* Note: Bamberton is an "ecologically sustainable community planned on Southern Vancouver Island.

Women, Shelter and the Environment

By Filomina Chioma Steady

With the Earth Summit only eight months away, Habitat is marking World Habitat Day, 7 October, with the theme "Shelter and the living environment". Filomina Chioma Steady, who is a special adviser on women in environment and development for the Earth Summit secretariat, points out the logic of the links between shelter, women and the environment.

Three long-neglected elements in the development puzzle — women, shelter and the environment — are finally being drawn together, and policy makers are finding the linkages very helpful.

They are increasingly aware that the crisis in human settlements and the environment, which affects almost all regions of the world, is due in large measure to the discrepancy between women's de facto responsibility for the maintenance of the home and their lack of access to land, financial resources, steady employment and credit worthiness, which are necessary to secure adequate housing.

Traditionally, women have largely been excluded from policy formulation relating to human settlements. Gender-based institutionalized discrimination prevents many women in both the North and the South from access to housing, mortgages and land ownership. This despite the fact that as many as 30 per cent of the world's households are headed by women, according to the World's Women 1970-1990, a recent United Nations publication.

Households closely reflect the conditions of the surrounding physical environment, and it is women who bear the main responsibility for protecting members of their households, especially the young, aged and infirm, from pollution, poor sanitation, natural disasters as well as poor housing conditions. They also face the greatest risk of disease from handling contaminated products and clothing within the household.

Furthermore, the majority of people seeking refuge from environmentally degraded homelands are of-

ten women and their children, as recent experiences in Bangladesh, the Gulf region and the Philippines have shown.

Although living conditions in squatter settlements created by the explosive rural-to-urban migration are deplorable for everyone, women face a heavier burden of maintaining deteriorating homesteads and protecting themselves and their children from police harassment and arbitrary squatter clearance measures.

Human settlements are clearly vulnerable, environmentally, to pollution of air and water resources including marine resources. Excessive growth of urban areas and the construction of large factories often lead to dangerous soil erosion, large-scale emissions of carbon dioxide and deterioration of housing conditions. In some cities, contamination of settlements by pollution from traffic, industries and hazardous materials provoke chronic cases of genetic defects, still births, spontaneous abortions, cancers and asthma in children.

Women as Managers

While we have come to appreciate the important role of women in the management of natural resources, we are slow to appreciate women's role in managing man-made (SIC) resources such as human settlements and in dealing with the difficulties they experience in so doing. In view of the environmental implications for human settlements and women, policies aimed at improving housing need to be integrated with efforts to improve the management of resources.

The experience of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements

(Habitat) has shown that women's groups play an increasingly important role in community schemes related to settlements. They can provide much-needed nutrition through community gardens and reforestation programmes. They are key to implementation of improved cooking stove technologies and maintenance of community water pumps, road repair and provision of social services such as community clinics, day care centres, social centres and activities related to maintaining a clean and healthy environment.

But improvement in the environment and human settlements for women is ultimately linked to improving women's overall status and their participation in socio-economic development including paid employment, edu-

Traditionally women have been excluded from policy formulation relating to human settlements.

cation, access to health services and child care facilities and management and decision-making roles in relation to the human settlement sector.

Reduction of the workload of women could result from better housing, easier access and better use of new and renewable sources of energy, access to clean water, and better sanitation. The end result will likely be an improvement of women's prospects for education, literacy, employment, leisure activities and a general improvement of the quality of their lives, their personal happiness and their status.

Reprinted from Development Forum, September/October 1991

ACTIVITIES AND IDEAS

This reading book is divided into subject headings dealing with food-related issues. The Table of Contents gives a brief overview of each article in the section. We have designed the activities to relate to these different sections.

These activities are organized in three ways. First are those entitled "To the Teacher", which are ideas for teacher-led lessons. Second are "Student Activities", those relating to specific articles and they are located under the title of the article in question. Finally, there are assignments developed for use at the end of a section, called "Additional Activities", where the student has the opportunity to "tie together" the information studied.

URBAN GROWTH

TO THE TEACHER

This topic might best be introduced by brainstorming a list of the positive and negative aspects of living in cities. These ideas could be expanded into research projects or group presentations, as students explore the issues around urbanization. Since British Columbia is also experiencing these urban trends, in light of Vancouver and Victoria becoming "international cities", a case study of changes in the local scene would be timely.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Article 1. *Land is Scarce* (p. 1)

The land shortage in Japan is more acute than in Canada. What are some of the results? Will this happen in Canada? What solutions have been attempted? Are you prepared to live like this?

It is stated that there is 2.6 square km of land in Canada for each inhabitant. Why then are we facing a land shortage?

In Japan, they sell real estate by the square cm. What would your home sell for in Tokyo? Redesign your home so it is more efficient and uses less space.

Article 2. *Confronting the challenge of tomorrow's cities* (p. 2)

List the direct and indirect problems the author feels are occurring because of the urbanization of the world. What does she suggest we do to meet these issues?

Article 3. *Distribution of World's 100 Largest* (p. 3)

Put the information from this chart on a world map. Include a legend.

Article 5. *Ever-Expanding Cairo* (p. 6)

After reading the article analyze Cairo's problems. What is working and what isn't?

Article 6. *World's Largest City* (p. 6)

Pretend you are the mayor of Mexico City. You can implement ONE change for the city. Choose the issue that you consider to be the most pressing. Develop an action plan to carry out your idea.

Article 7. *Urban Exiles* (p. 7)

Why is this article called "Urban Exiles"? Where are people being exiled from? What are the results?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

A quote from one of the articles states "We have looked to the cities for cultural advance and intellectual innovation, sophistication in technology and political and economic leadership". How would YOU plan your city's future so we could meet these requirements for the next century. Be realistic. Use diagrams, maps and other visuals to help your presentation.

Imagine yourself living with your family in one room in one of the world's mega-cities. You have never left the city, never seen a farm and rarely seen a tree. Write a letter to a pen pal who lives in a rural community describing your life and asking about theirs.

Role play a couple trying to decide whether to leave their drought-stricken farm and move into a city.

Pretend you have been hired by the United Nations to investigate the problems of urban growth. Write a report outlining what you feel are the most important issues surrounding urban growth.

URBAN PROBLEMS

TO THE TEACHER

The problems described in these articles are overwhelming. It can be disempowering to read about problems that have no easy solutions. Discuss with students their feelings about the issues and stress the changes that are occurring. Have students collect "good news" stories about people who are making a difference. Invite a guest speaker who has worked in a developing country.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Article 1. *The Man-Made (sic) Side of Natural Disasters* (p. 9)

Read the following excerpt from this article "...the earthquake that hit the major American city of San Francisco in 1989 resulted in fewer than 100 deaths, whereas a similar quake in Central America would likely have left thousands dead." The author lists four reasons why a "natural disaster" in Central America would be so serious. Describe these, and comment on the solutions the author proposes.

Articles 2-3. *Water in Cities* (pp. 11-13)

Read the three articles and explain why water is essential to cities and the problems facing cities trying to satisfy this demand.

If the aquifers in the US are being depleted, does Canada have an obligation to provide the US with water? What are the pros and cons of Canada exporting its water?

Article 6. *Women's projects* (p. 15)

Read the article "In the Beginning". At the end of the last memorandum it asks, "We have a major problem. What do you suggest?" Discuss in groups and make a presentation to your class.

Article 5. *Auto Earth* (p. 18)

Will our love affair with the automobile kill us?

Debate: "Severe restrictions (eg raising the driving age, limiting the number of cars per family) on driving must be implemented around the world to prevent further environmental disaster".

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. These articles are not in the nightly news because they are not sudden disasters, but ongoing problems that are around every day. How would you go about making people aware of these situations? Prepare a video or Public Service Announcement that draws attention to the issues and suggests how we can help.

2. There are numerous small local projects occurring in the Third World that are helping to solve urban problems. Research one of these projects to find out what they are doing and raise money to help them.

3. The Commonwealth Games are coming to Victoria in 1994. Find out what the city is doing to prepare for the huge numbers of people who will stress its facilities. Write a letter to the mayor to suggest your ideas.



HOMELESSNESS

TO THE TEACHER

Because homelessness is a local issue, it will be immediate for the students. This can be both positive and negative. Organizations that work with homeless people are invaluable resources and can provide up-to-date and meaningful information about the situation in your community. Be sensitive to the fact that some students in your class will have personal experience with these issues.

Record the students' ideas of who the homeless are, why they are in the situation, etc. As the students read the articles or question guest speakers, have them re-check their beliefs. Make up a display that shows the students' new understandings at the end of the unit.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES (pp. 20-33)

1. Read these articles as a section. Pretend you have been hired to teach homeless children. What would you provide them with? What would the priorities be?
2. Write a short story/essay reflecting what you would miss about your home if you were homeless.

3. Prepare the "Life-Cycle" of a street kid. What might happen to someone who is on the streets? What positive and negative changes might they go through and what would be the results? What options are open to such a person? What will happen to them?

4. Do you know someone who has lived on the street. If they are willing, prepare questions and interview the person. Present your information to the class.

SLUMS/SHANTYTOWNS

TO THE TEACHER

There are a wide variety of viewpoints expressed in these articles, and discussions could emerge about these. Have students form an opinion and present their reasoning to the class.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Article 1. *The Squatter-builders of Lima* (p. 34)

Describe the method by which the squatters organize their communities.

Article 2. *Slums are Not a Dead End* (p. 36)

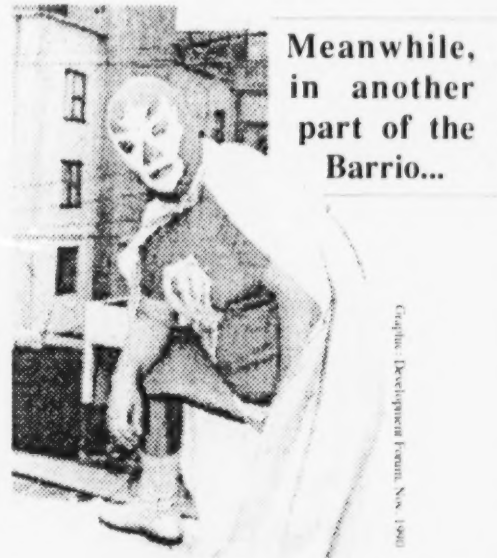
The author of this article gives an alternative point-of-view. Describe how he feels the immigrants fare in cities. Use examples.

Article 3. *Offending the eyes of the Mighty* (p. 38)

Write a letter that Shin Ko would have written to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) describing her feelings.

Article 4. *"SPARC" of hope for India's Slum Dwellers* (p. 39)

Describe the changes SPARC has made for India's slum dwell-



ers. Which of these is the most important in your mind and why?

Article 5. *Super Barrio to the Rescue* (p. 41)

Make a comic book story of the adventures of Super Barrio.

URBAN PLANNING

TO THE TEACHER

This section deals with city planning to meet the needs of the future. Case studies and "solutions" to urbanization issues are presented. Have students do further research about some solutions to the issues presented in this booklet. Since they will be adults in these "cities of the future" it is important they are informed about these issues.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Article 1. *Redesigning Our Cities* (p. 43)

Describe the problem with our cities now and how the author feels we should redesign our urban areas.

Article 2. *The Importance of Planning* (p. 46)

What does Professor Kim suggest as improvements for Seoul? How do they compare to the ideas in the article "Redesigning our Cities"?

Articles 3-10. *Urban Planning World-wide* (pp. 49-56)

These articles all deal with preparing our cities for the next century. What are the major changes advocated in these articles? Do you agree or disagree with the suggestions?

Look at your community. How might it change to meet the needs for the future. What suggestions would you give a community planning meeting? Prepare a presentation.

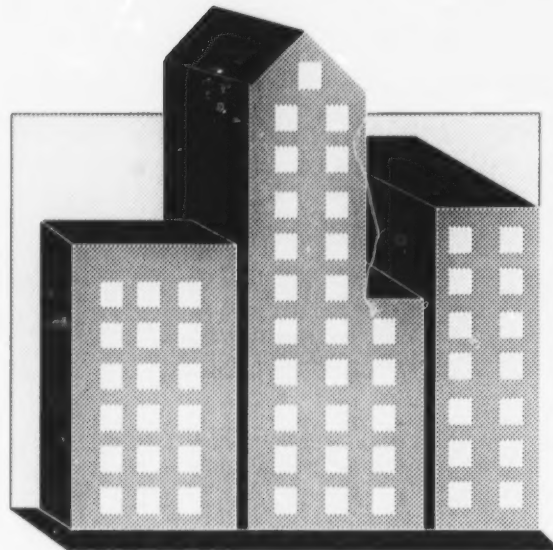
Write a story from the point-of view of a car that is reading these articles. What does the future hold for our trusty automobile?

Project yourself into the year 2010. How old will you be? What do you think your community will be like? What changes will have occurred? What will your life be like?

Design a city of the future. Plan a place that would meet the economic, social, cultural and political needs of its inhabitants. Fantasize about a trouble-free environment. How would you do it?

Examine the Twelve Dimensions of Ecological Sustainability at Bamberton (p. 55). Are these ideas realistic? How do you think they can meet each of its goals?

"All right... What should I do differently?"



WRITING EFFECTIVE LETTERS

It is said that for every letter received by an M.P. or M.L.A. there are another 100 constituents who share a concern on the same issue. Elected officials do pay attention to letters and they do have an impact. For example, letter writing campaigns in the Prairie Provinces in the 1970s formed part of a successful strategy for increased development aid from the provincial governments.

Letter writing is a very concrete action item for a group. You can plan a joint letter writing session at the end of a development education program. You can hold a "letter writing day", in which you invite all your members, friends, neighbors and their children to a meeting hall to write letters. Set up different writing stations with lots of paper, pens, envelopes, and sample letters. Set up stations for children as well ... they can add their drawings and letters too! Make it a fun event by providing background music and coffee and refreshments. Think of creative letter ideas: write them on papier mache characters (hogs? doves? mice?), inside a large outline of a character or picture such as a cutout of people working together, or make a collage of letters. The releasing of a large number of colored balloons with letters attached (you can photocopy one letter, addressed "To Canada") can provide a very symbolic gesture at the closing of a letter-writing day.

Build a letter-writing campaign by asking different groups of people to write letters (such as your church group, or NGO members, or social group). Time the campaign so that large amounts of mail



Graphic: The Africa File

would arrive at the official's desk on certain days. Change the text of the letter for the subsequent letters.

Here are some tips for effective letters to public officials:

1. Limit each letter to a single issue, keep it brief and to the point.
2. Make your letter personal. Tell of any personal involvement you have in the issue and state why you are personally advocating a particular position. Point up any moral factors involved in the issue.
3. Identify any organization to which you belong which has taken an official stand or some action on the issue. Reiterate the stand or quote the official statement or resolution.
4. Let the receiver of the letter know that you are concerned and informed. Be positive.
5. Point out concerns you have around the issue or criticisms of the stand or actions the legislator or the party or the government has taken.
6. End the letter with a question that needs a reply; requesting information from the legislator or requesting his opinion, stand, or past action on the issue.
7. Respond to the reply with another question and more concerns or criticisms.

Forms of Address for Canadian Government Officials:

The Governor General
Her/His Excellency _____
Government House
Ottawa

The Prime Minister of Canada
The Right Honourable _____
House of Commons
Ottawa, K1A 0A6

Member of the Cabinet
The Honourable _____
House of Commons
Ottawa, K1A 0A6

Member of Parliament
_____, M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, K1A 0A6

Member of the Senate
The Honourable _____
The Senate
Ottawa

The Lieutenant-Governor of (a Province)
His/Her Honour _____
Government House
Capital City, Province

Premier of a Province
The Honourable _____, M.L.A.
Legislative Assembly
Capital City, Province

Member of a provincial government
_____, M.L.A.
Legislative Assembly
Capital City, Province

Reprinted from *Basics and Tools*.
Basics and Tools: A Collection of Popular Education Resources and Activities was published by CUSO in Ottawa in 1988.

The Urbanization Scrapbook

This newly updated reading kit presents a scrapbook of selected articles from 25 journals and periodicals from around the world. The material is current, concise and balanced in viewpoint. The scrapbook also contains a new section of teaching activities and ideas. All materials in the scrapbook are copyright approved for photocopying for classroom use.

The **Urbanization Scrapbook** covers such topics as: urban growth; natural disasters; water in cities; the automobile; homelessness; shantytowns; women in the cities; and urban planning.

Global Issues Reading Kits

This scrapbook is one in a series of reading kits. The complete series is:

- Kit #1 - The Environment**
- Kit #2 - The Food Scrapbook**
- Kit #3 - The Urbanization Scrapbook**
- Kit #4 - The Economics Scrapbook**
- Kit #5 - The Population Scrapbook**



VIDEA

(Victoria International Development Education Association)

VIDEA is an International Development learner centre located in Victoria, B.C. Since 1977 it has carried out a variety of programs designed to create a greater awareness of global issues. VIDEA has developed a wide range of global education materials for schools. For more information or for a free copy of VIDEA's **Global Education Resources Catalogue**, contact VIDEA, 407 - 620 View Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1J6 (604) 385-2333.